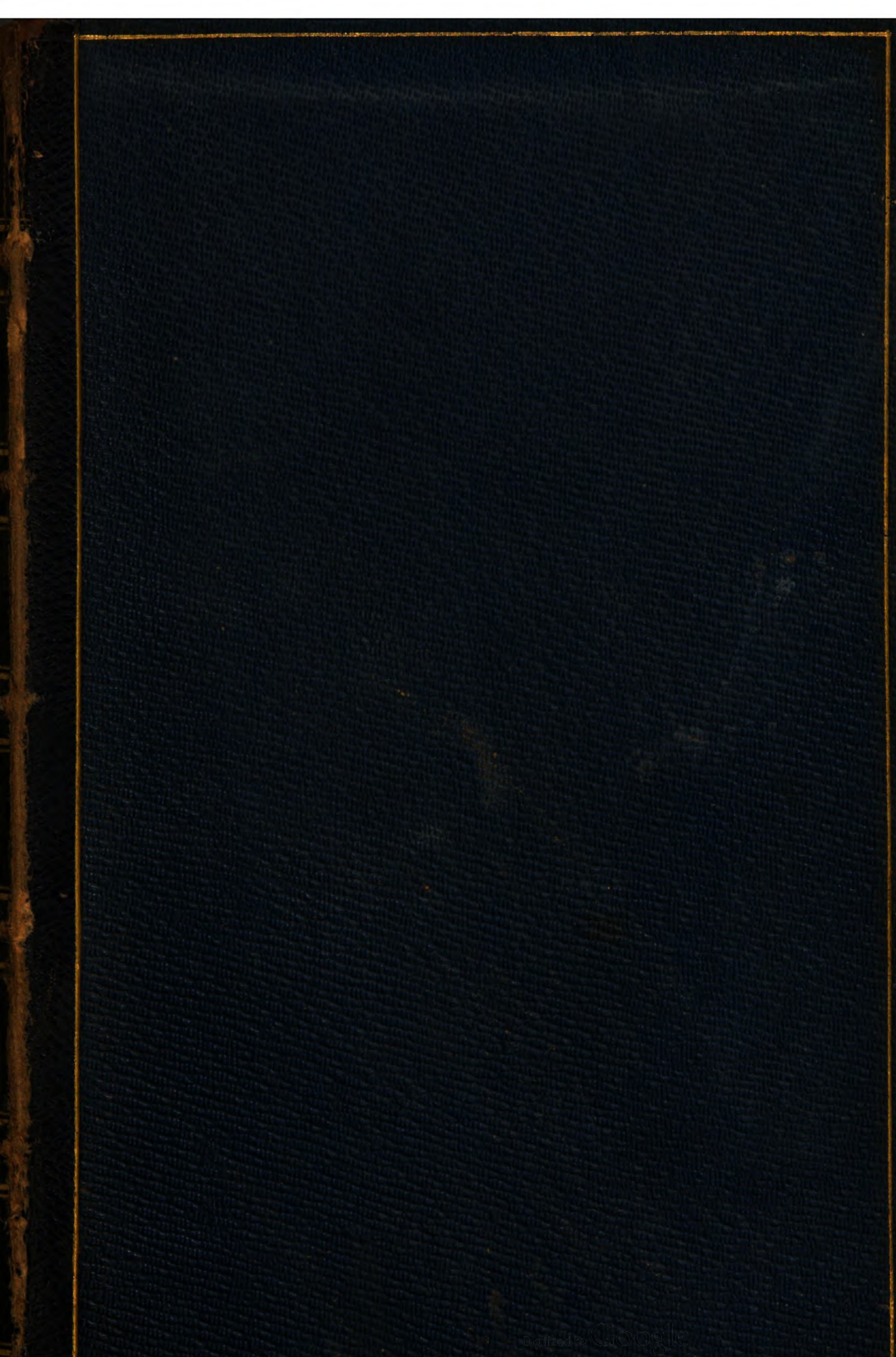

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ON THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

PAROCHIAL LECTURES.

BY

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TO
THE PARISHIONERS OF
SAINT MARY, NEWINGTON,
SURREY,
These Lectures
WRITTEN FOR THEIR EDIFICATION.
AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR DESIRE,
ARE INSCRIBED
BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND
AND MINISTER.

PREFACE.

IN publishing these Lectures, I yield to the earnestly expressed desire of many who heard them delivered. I feel that in so doing, I lay myself open to much animadversion; but I see not how I can shrink from it on this account. Of this I am conscious to my inmost soul, that I desire hereby to promote the Salvation of men, and the Glory of our God and Saviour.

The Lectures were delivered in Advent last; and my reason for selecting this subject, was, That I found myself frequently at a loss, in my Sunday discourses, in explaining some points of

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Christian doctrine; on account of the imperfect information too often possessed relative to certain fundamental principles of the Gospel. I was well aware, however, that Lectures such as these were hardly adapted to a Sunday audience, I therefore embraced the opportunity offered in Advent, of delivering them in the Week-Evenings. And having preached them, I felt that I could not refuse to print them when called upon to do so.

It is unnecessary to detail the causes which have delayed their appearance so long. To those who are acquainted with the circumstances of the Parish, this would be needless; and to all others uninteresting.

As, on the one hand, I desire not, and shall not enter into, any controversy on the subject of these Discourses; so, on the other hand, I shall receive with thankfulness the correction of any

error into which I may inadvertently have fallen. I have written, as simply as possible, for the good of the people committed to my charge; and not for human praise. The Lectures were not composed as Arguments intended for the press—(this is very apparent)—but as Practical instructions for plain people. And “if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom; neither the CHURCHES of God.”

The great Apostle’s hope, I trust, is mine; That as in all things, so now also, “Christ may be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death!”

I.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, A WITNESS AGAINST FALSE PHILOSOPHIZING.

FROM THE EPISTLE.*—"They have not all obeyed the Gospel; for
"Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?"—ROM. x. 16.

UNLESS we affix a definite meaning to any given statement, an intelligent belief of it must be quite impossible. Nevertheless, there is ground to suspect that some very important articles of our faith receive a spurious kind of technical belief from a large proportion of professing Christians; who inertly admit what has been taught them, without caring to enquire what it means, or whether it has any meaning.

Observe, as an example, that part of the creed of the Universal Church, which it is the object of these

* The Feast of St. Andrew.

Lectures to bring especially under your notice. We are all taught from our earliest years to say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," and, "I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church;" but if any number of us were taken and separately questioned as to what we really mean when we make this profession, it is to be feared that very few would be found to agree; and still fewer perhaps would have any meaning, or see any practical utility in the Article at all.

The most ignorant will commonly find it convenient to settle such a point at once, by intimating that it is a probable "relic of Popery" of no great consequence, which "the Reformers" forgot to destroy. But even men of better information, and more reflection, will be greatly at a loss to explain that Article of the faith which still they constantly profess. One will consider it to contain a recognition of the existence of "an Invisible Church," that is, I conceive, a large number of true Christians scattered throughout the world;—though it must seem rather strange to make a fact of this kind an "Article of Faith." Another will regard it as an acknowledgment of the necessity of some kind of Visible church-membership. While others will strangely suppose it to convey some qualified ad-

mission, at least, of the authority of the Church of Rome. Now without enumerating more opinions,—it is plain that there is something unsatisfactory, to say no more, in all these vague or trivial explanations. The Article in question was evidently considered a most important one, both by those who originally framed the Creed, and by the Churches which have preserved it. Brief as this Summary of the Christian Faith is, confining itself almost to the bare outline of the Christian facts—it would seem that this Article must needs be inserted among the most solemn and important of all the truths enumerated—the “belief in the Holy Ghost” preceding it—and that in the “communion of saints” and “forgiveness of sins” immediately following it. It can be no unimportant point, which the Church of Christ, in every age, has thought right thus to incorporate into its concisest confession of necessary Christian truth.

And the frequency with which it is enforced is also very remarkable. When we are first of all baptized into Christ this is part of the confession, or, as St. Peter calls it, “the answer of a good conscience,” made in our name. “I believe in the Holy Catholic Church:”—or, if we were baptized in adult years, we made that profession for

ourselves. In the Catechism, short as it is, drawn up for the most elementary instruction of our childhood—the same creed, the same article, appear ; and to this same creed, express reference is made in the renewal of our baptismal vows, which is required by the bishop at Confirmation. In the daily prayers of the Church it is constantly repeated ; and on Saints' days and on Sundays we confess twice over in the morning, and once in the evening,—“ I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.” It cannot surely be any frivolous point which is thus insisted on ; and an enquiry concerning which is even to be carried to the chamber of the dying, according to the Church's direction, in the service for the Visitation of the Sick. It can be no common matter—no mere acknowledgment that there is such an institution, either spiritual or visible, as a Christian Church. If this were all, we surely could not so strictly require it of an unbaptized man ; we could not put it to a dying man as an essential portion of a saving creed—without the admission of which, both the sacraments of the Church might—nay, must be withheld. It must mean more—much more—than this ; and I beseech you seriously to follow me while I attempt to elicit the real meaning of this important Article.

If I am addressing any who have already made up their minds as to what they will or will not receive as truth, I must indeed warn them that if they are wrong in what they have thus resolved to maintain—if, after all, they are in ignorance of the truth (which is surely possible), then their error is wilful and their ignorance hopeless. And I now address myself to those only, who do not enter on the enquiry with minds already “made up;” those who have not determined beforehand what *shall* be God’s truth;—those who, calmly and humbly, are prepared to enquire, in every matter,—What is their Lord’s Will? not, what in their judgment it might be, or should be;—those, in a word, who are ready to acknowledge the truth, whatever it may be. Many there are who formally appeal to God’s Holy Word in proof of their opinions; but few go to that word to get their opinions. For I have found that when the plain words of God are brought to some men, they set themselves, as they say, to “explain” them, instead of *submitting* to them; and believing simply what their Heavenly Father says. Surely a much shorter Bible would have suited such persons; for it would seem that they have first of all embraced one or two, so called, “spiritual” principles, and have then followed them out systema-

tically; constructing a religious theory by mere human reasonings and fallible deductions: whatever opposes their scheme they simply consider "a difficulty to be elucidated"—and thus they seem to appeal to the Scriptures, not so much to learn God's truth, as to see "whether God is of their opinion."¹ And a like spirit manifests itself in others of a different class, who are ever professing a faith in the Holy Catholic Church, but are very unwilling to submit to it, when it is opposed to modern opinions of their own, or corrupt practices of the church to which they may belong—whether Romish or Protestant. I trust, however, that I am now addressing many who have no sympathy with such insincerity on either hand. If you really believe the Scriptures, you must not hesitate to embrace what they teach, even if it should be quite new to you—quite different from all you have learned. If you really believe in the Holy Catholic Church, you must not shrink from the consequence—even if it should lead you to differ from those whom you love and reverence—even if it should compel you, in a manner, to begin anew in religion. In any serious matter it is worth while to take the trouble to be right; but above all in so serious a

¹ Hooker.

matter as religion. In this it will be no consolation at the last to reflect that we were wrong in company with others, however dear or well esteemed among men. The Lord of truth Himself hath said, 'That if we leave not father and mother; and friends and riches and lands, if needs be, for His sake, we cannot be His disciples.' Let us then honestly consult the writings of the Holy Evangelists and Apostles; and let us thus endeavour to follow the teaching of the Primitive Church, as to this point in particular—The belief in the Catholic Church.

Now, the very first question to be decided is, what are we to understand by "the Church" which we are required to believe in? What is the scriptural and primitive truth concerning Church authority?—The word *ἐκκλησία* of course, means no more than an "assembly," and nothing would be more sophistical or unsafe than any argument built simply on the signification or etymology of a word. At the commencement of Christianity the term "Church" was very generally and vaguely employed, to denote any assembly of men, whether Christian or Heathen, large or small. And this was but natural, as the sacred writers did not invent the word; it was a common one in the language

which they wrote in ; and it was some little time before it received a specific and critical signification, as denoting an organized body of believers. Thus, at first, we find that a few persons in one family are described as a " Church"—" the Church in Cæsar's household." And again, on the other hand, the large riotous assembly of heathen at Ephesus, who would have slain St. Paul, are called by this very name ; for when the uproar among them was appeased, it is said that the governor " dismissed the *Assembly*"—the Ecclesia, or Church. So that we can argue nothing from the mere use of this word, unless there is something in its connexion to give it a definite meaning. They, then, who argue, that since Cæsar's household is termed a Church, *therefore* any party of Christians meeting together may be regarded as a true Church, in a strict and critical sense, plainly reason from insufficient premises ; since they might just as well infer, that every riotous assemblage is a true apostolic Church, *because* the word Church was applied by St. Luke to the Ephesian tumult. They forget that the word was a common one, descriptive of any assembly ; and that, therefore, there must be something definitive to mark it, when it is used in a technical sense.

Twice, and, I think, only twice, our Blessed Lord Himself appears to have used the word CHURCH ; and these are the earliest instances on record, in the New Testament, of the use of the word at all. On this ground alone they possess an interest ; but they have a further importance, because there is something in the circumstances under which the term was employed, in both instances, to fix and define, to a certain extent, its Christian meaning.

The first instance is recorded in the 16th ch. of St. Matt. v. 18. A very short time previous to our Lord's suffering, He questioned His disciples, and St. Peter in particular, as to the nature of their faith in Him ; which questioning elicited that noble confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." After which, Jesus thus addressed the Chief of the Apostles :—" I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build MY CHURCH, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This, then, is the first time that we meet with the word Church ; and perhaps its definite meaning may be partly learned from this passage. We must be careful, however, not to overstrain it. It hence appears plain, doubtless, that it was Christ's intention to build a church, i. e. (to take the simplest meaning of the metaphor) to call together an

assembly of men, to be in some peculiar sense His own—"MY Church"—my assembly. And he promises, in some manner, to make use of St. Peter as an instrument in accomplishing this. Thus much cannot be disputed by any.

Turn next to the 18th chapter, v. 17 and 18, and you will find the second case in which our Lord employs the word in question. He is giving directions as to the course to be pursued with any of His disciples who may fall into sin. Such an one is first to be admonished by his brethren; and then, it is added, "If he neglect to hear them, tell 'it to THE CHURCH; and if he neglect to hear THE 'CHURCH, let him be to you as an heathen man 'and a publican.'" From which we learn something further concerning this Church, or assembly, which Christ promised to gather by means of the Apostle. We learn this—that this assembly, which Christ calls "My Church" is not an Invisible institution, not a mystical corporation held together merely by secret bonds and spiritual affinities. The Church here mentioned is plainly a Visible Body; an institution which could take cognizance of complaints made against any of its members, and deal authoritatively with offenders. In the following verse (18) a solemn assurance is given that this

sentence of Christ's Visible Church shall be ratified by God himself. "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever *YE* (including all the Apostles) shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever *YE* shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Thus much, then, we learn from our Lord's own use of the word *CHURCH*, in the only two places where He is recorded to have used it. He intended to establish, by means of his Apostles, and to endow with awful privileges, a Visible society of men, with which, as we afterwards find, He promised to continue for ever. It is certain from Scripture that He afterwards said to these same Apostles, at the most solemn hour of His life—just before He left them—"As my Father hath sent Me, so send I you." "Whosoever sins *YE* remit they are remitted, and whosoever sins *YE* retain they are retained," John xx. 21—23. Again, just before His last agony, "I have chosen you and *ordained you* that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should *remain*," John xv. 16. And again, His very last words, which one Evangelist mentions, are these, Matt. xxviii. 20: "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them . . . and teaching them to observe *all things whatsoever I have commanded you*," which expression ("whatsoever I

“ have commanded you”) being undefined, leaves to the Apostles, and some persons to the end of time, an indefinite power ; for it is added, “ and, lo, I am with you alway, even to the *end of the world.*”

Observe, then ; Immediately after our Lord’s ascension, we find the fulfilment of the promise, that a Visible Church should be established by St. Peter. The very *first* thing done, by his advice, as if of the first importance,¹ was, the filling up of the vacant Apostleship, or “ Bishoprick,” as it is called ; thus seeming at the very beginning to check the notion that the Apostleship was to die away gradually. After this St. Peter preached most powerfully at Jerusalem, and converted multitudes of the people ; but he did not stop here ; this was only the first step. He was not satisfied, it seems, with converting men to Christian truth ; they were to become members of a new “ Visible Society.” Thus we read at the opening of the Acts of the Apostles, “ that they who gladly received the word *were baptized,*” Acts ii. 41. They that believed were “ added to the “ Lord.” “ The Lord *added to the Church* daily,” Acts ii. 47. It was evidently thought to be not enough to keep to the *doctrine* of the Apostles ; it was necessary to preserve their *fellowship*. Thus

¹ See the Second Lesson for this Morning’s Service.

we read, Acts ii. 41, 42, that the three thousand who “gladly received the word” were *baptized*, and “continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine *and* “*fellowship*, in breaking of bread (i. e. the Holy “Communion) and prayers,” the Daily supplications of the Church. In this manner was the first CHURCH established, “Built on the foundation of “the apostles and prophets,” Eph. ii. 20.

Such are the facts of Scripture and history ; and from these we gather the first Christian meaning of the word Church, and the Christian duty of Church membership. Now the Apostles, in their life-time, extended this same institution, i.e. established many “Churches” throughout the world ; which, however, had a similarity and oneness, which constituted them in a general sense ONE Church ; and they were derived from one Apostolic origin, and had “ONE Body and ONE Spirit, ONE Lord, ONE “Faith, ONE Baptism.” And when the Apostles drew near to the end of their course, we find that they ordained SUCCESSORS ; because, you will remember, Christ had promised His presence, with His Apostles and Church, to the end of time. Thus St. Paul ordained Timothy ; St. Peter ordained Ignatius ; St. John ordained Polycarp ; and thus it was in all the churches : and thus it

continued. These bishops ordained others.¹ It is an incontrovertible fact, that for many hundreds of years no new Church, as such, was voluntarily set up by any Christians. The very idea implies a contradiction. Every Church on the face of the earth was necessarily descended from the Apostles; indeed any institution, not apostolically descended, could not have been thought a "CHURCH" in any primitive sense. It would have been *unlike* what, as we have seen, was first accounted "Christ's CHURCH," however good an institution it might be, in other respects. It would have had no promise of His presence. History, moreover, is decisive on the matter. If we are wrong in so saying, point out the fact. Tell us where to find the first voluntary Church;—but if it cannot be found for very many centuries after Christ, surely a man who does not wish for a new religion,—a man who wishes to follow the primitive Christians, and the Apostles, must adhere faithfully to The Church descended from them, and to none other.

Our time will not permit us to fill up this outline of the nature and authority of the Church. Thus much however was necessary, to explain, hereafter, the notion of Catholicity. Enough has, now,

¹ See Lecture IV., where this argument is continued.

I trust, been said, to show that Christ and his Apostles established and transmitted to all time, “even to the end of the world,” a Visible society, or CHURCH.—But further:

We find that one of the Apostles strikingly declares THE CHURCH to be the “pillar and ground of truth.”—What was his meaning?—He could not surely mean, that every particular Church, apostolically founded, was an infallible teacher of Truth?—Far from it. Where are the seven churches of Asia?—They were unfaithful—and have perished: and yet we must believe that Christ is faithful—and deserts not HIS CHURCH. Let us, then, examine more closely.

Observe well the terms of His promise. Christ doubtless promised to be with His Apostles to the “end of the world;” but the promise evidently was given to them generally—not individually; he did not promise that there should not be many a Judas among them—as there had been one already;—nay, the Apostles themselves did not interpret the promise of individuals:—The very chief of them disagreed: and St. Paul was anxious lest he himself should be a “cast-away.” If Christ’s promised presence and guidance were not particular, it follows that they were general; for some meaning,

doubtless, the words must have. He promised, then, to lead His Church *generally* into all truth. He made not the promise to any particular part of the Church; so that any particular Church may err,—but the Universal body of Churches, i. e., The Catholic Church,—*cannot*. And from this we may justly infer that Particularity, in any doctrine or opinion, is, at least, a presumption of error; and Universality is a sure mark of truth. We cannot suppose that all Christ's Church throughout the world could be wrong, in any important matter, without questioning the promised continuance of our Lord's presence, and charging falsehood on the Spirit of Truth; and thus the Catholic or Universal Church of Christ, is a faithful and constant depository of the truth. Here and there a branch of the Church may die, but Christ is the living root, and His ever-present life sustains the general vitality. We conclude then, that this is the Church in which we profess our belief,—the CATHOLIC CHURCH, which is the “pillar and ground of truth” to all Christian men; and we must hold that, on points of essential importance, particular Churches may claim our faith and allegiance only so far as they agree with the body Catholic. Therefore our conclusion is, that when we are taught to say, we “be-

lieve in the Holy Catholic Church," we mean (to adopt the language of Vincentius,) that we acknowledge as the true Christian doctrine whatever was received—From the beginning, In every country, By every true Church:—"semper, ubique, et ab omnibus."

On this subject much confusion of thinking has arisen from the circumstance that the Church of Rome lays exclusive claim to the name of Catholic; and too many acquiesce in this claim, who ought to know better;—for, in saying the creeds, we all confess ourselves to be Catholics, at least every Sunday. The terms Roman Catholic Church—or English Catholic—or French Catholic—can only mean the Roman, or English, or French, *part* of the Church Catholic. The least reflection will convince any one of the impropriety of calling any particular Church, even if it were the purest on earth, by the strict epithet "Catholic," or Universal. It is just as if any particular County or Town should pretend to be "All England." And if, indeed, you follow out the parallel thus suggested, it may simplify to you the notion of Catholic truth; which is, the 'Christian sentiment of the general body of true CHURCHES from the first age.' The English language is the language spoken generally in England;

If any particular county or district should become corrupt in its dialect, and at length totally depart from the common and acknowledged language of the country that common language would still be true English, and the new dialect would be an innovation. And, in the same manner, it would not be correct to call any custom or practice a peculiarly "English" one, which could only be traced in this or that particular city. Just thus it is, that Catholic Christian Truth is what is generally taught by all Christian Churches, and not by one in particular. There are certain great leading truths which are called "Catholic," because the great body of Christian Churches agreed about them for centuries : and this agreement constituted, in one respect, the UNITY of the Catholic Church. It hardly belongs to our argument, in this place, to show that there was also a VISIBLE UNITY; and that in each particular Church the Bishop, or Apostle, was the organ and source of Unity ; I would only observe, by the way, that this is what we acknowledge in the fuller statement made in the Nicene Creed—"I believe ONE Catholic and APOSTOLIC Church."

But to continue ; for I desire (before I proceed) to make even more clear, by the light of con-

trast, the notion of Catholic truth, as taught by the Catholic Church, in which we believe.

In every age, even from the first, there have been those who have "departed from THE truth" and "made shipwreck of their faith"—those who have unfurled the standard of Particularity, in the face of the Catholic Church. There have been those who have forgotten the Apostolic rules—"that we all speak the SAME thing," 1 Cor. i. 10; that we "keep the UNITY," Eph. iv. 3; that we "be of ONE mind"—and remember that there must be "ONE BODY and ONE Spirit, even as we are called "with ONE hope of our calling; ONE Lord, ONE "Faith, ONE Baptism; ONE God and Father of all," Eph. iv. 4, &c. The consequences of these divisions among Christians have been very fearful. The object of the Messiah's Advent—"to gather together all things in ONE"—to abolish all divisions in God's earthly family—has been frustrated. It was our Lord's earnestly expressed desire, that his Church might be ONE—"as Thou, "Father, art in Me and I in Thee—that *the world* "may believe that Thou hast sent Me," John xvii. 21. And the separation of many from the ONE doctrine of the Church Catholic has occasioned much infidelity.—The facts are undeniable. The

Church *has* been divided; and the world has *not* believed on Christ!

And among us, are there not many now who persuade themselves, that they receive the gospel of Christ, and yet who never care to obey “all things whatsoever” it teaches? Many, who, like ancient Israel, “go about to establish a righteousness”—to build up a religion of their own?—I fear that the uncatholic, the disunited, the disobedient,—those who call in question Catholic Truth, and demand of us *more* evidence—are now so fearfully numerous among us, that we may too well appropriate the lament of the Apostle, in our text, “They “have not all obeyed the Gospel!—for Esaias “saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?”

Contrast, now, with this independent spirit of disobedience, the humility of the true Catholic, and say which resembles the peaceful spirit of Him who said, “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of “Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye “shall find *rest* unto your souls,” Matt. xi. 29.—Which, think you, is the humbler, the safer, path for Christians of every age and station to pursue?—To “exercise themselves in things too high” for them, or for any of us?—or to say, ‘I desire to ‘think as the blessed Apostles thought—I desire to

‘believe what “the Holy Church throughout all
‘“the world doth acknowledge.” I desire to think,
‘and say, and do, what Christ’s Church from
‘the very first has always said and thought and
‘done: in brief,—“I believe in the Holy Catholic
‘“Church” which Christ promised to remain with
‘always; and which he loved too well to mislead?’
This must surely be admitted to be the *safer* and
better path for humble men to tread, who simply
fear God, and love their Saviour, and desire to
“save their own souls alive.”

Let us now pass to the special object of these
Lectures, which is to show something more than
this: To show that the path of the Church is one
which the wise need not blush to tread—since it is
verily the path of truth—the “way of understand-
ing.” And in showing how the CHURCH is to be
our Guide, I trust we shall find a fit reply to what
is idly objected to us, when it is urged—‘Supposing
‘what is thus said by Churchmen be quite true,
‘still if the Bible be sufficient, what is the use of
‘all this?’ This then is the use of it:—A sub-
mission to Christ’s Holy Catholic Church will save
men from being drawn aside by those whom the
Apostle describes as “deceiving and being de-
ceived.” The ingenuity or sin of man has too often

perverted God's truth, without openly denying the Bible—and the Catholic Church has ever been God's Witness against the prevalent error of each succeeding age—the prevalent corruption of Scripture verity ; and thus maintained its lofty character, as the "pillar and ground of Truth" to God's people. Thus we find that from the Apostle's age to the period of the decline of Greek and Roman literature, Christianity was particularly assailed by False philosophy ; but the Catholic Church all along bore witness against it. The corruptions introduced by philosophy, whether Jewish or Pagan, were peculiar to certain individuals or churches, and never received the stamp of Catholic authority. —With the decline of European literature and the rise of Mahometanism in the seventh century an era of darkness commenced. The bishops of Rome assumed Papal power:—Corruptions and superstitions accumulated on every hand. But, in the West especially the errors of Romanism, as they grew up, were protested against by the more primitive practice of Christ's Catholic Church : even to the time of the Reformation when corruption had risen to its greatest height.—At that time a new evil appeared, which shook to its very foundation the whole fabric of Christianity. The Unity

of the Church was openly and systematically set at nought—the authority of the ministry was disparaged—the very existence of the sacraments endangered. Countless sects arose, whose jarring violence seemed for awhile to dislocate the very frame-work of the whole Gospel system; and against these flagrant evils the Catholic Church hath had to continue a stedfast protest from that day to our own.—In our time a new evil has appeared. The advance of science and the pride of intellect have still more indisposed men to “obey the Gospel.” The attempt is made to rationalize, i. e., bring down and make level to human reason, the highest “mysteries of Godliness;” not merely to reform the general practice of Christian antiquity, but even to submit the authentic writings of the Apostles themselves to the ordeal of emendatory criticism. And against this cold-blooded and fatal error, the Catholic Church lifts up her voice; that the children of God, scattered abroad in this evil world, may be warned of the danger, and flee from it as from a serpent.

We have to observe, then, somewhat in detail, the manner in which Christ's Holy Catholic Church hath thus, from age to age, vindicated his truth, against False philosophy—against Romanism—

against Schism—and against Rationalism. The first of these subjects will occupy the remainder of our attention at this time. In the three following Lectures, the errors of the Romanist, the Schismatic, and the Rationalist, will severally come under review ; and, I trust, we shall find that there hath ever been to Christ's faithful people a "sure word of living testimony"—a "light shining in a dark place ;" and, in a word, that it hath ever been both their safety and wisdom to confess with humility, "We believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

The Apostles, the founders of our Faith, had first of all to encounter the False philosophy of their time ; and most boldly, do we find the great Apostle of the Gentiles disputing the sophistries of the Epicureans and Stoics, and maintaining Christ's truth before the court of Areopagites at Athens. But, notwithstanding the efforts of the Apostles, a spurious philosophy, both Jewish and Greek, soon made its way in many Churches. Hence the urgent exhortation, "Beware lest any man spoil you "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the "tradition of *men*, after the rudiments of the *world*, "and not after Christ," Coloss. ii. 8. The principal philosophical corruptions of Christianity, in

the first age, 'proceeded, however, from a Jewish quarter. The Gnostic heresy, that strange mixture of mystic Judaism and Heathenism, spread very widely among the primitive Christians. But the voice of the Catholic Church was clearly against it; which is plain from¹ Irenæus and other writers; though, of course, the practice of the Catholic Church is the best test of its opinion. St. Paul himself speaks against this Gnosis, "science falsely so called," 1 Tim. vi. 20. And the apostolic Fathers, and especially Ignatius,² join in condemning it. The cognate heresies of the Cerinthians, and of the Ebionites,³ met the same fate. The ancient Jewish sects of semi-philosophy, whose followers were called Therapeutæ and Essenes,⁴ drew away some few Christians, but only a few, who probably sowed the seed of the monachism which sprung up in Egypt and elsewhere, at no remote period. St. Paul seems to allude to them when he upbraids "voluntary humility" and "neglecting the body." But it would be a tedious and unprofitable task to enumerate even the names of the various systems of false doctrine which were upheld by dif-

¹ Iren. lib. i. cap. 25, &c. Epiphanius. Hær. 28.

² Ep. ad. Smyrn.

³ Epiphanius. Hær. 30. Irenæus, lib. i. cap. 26.

⁴ Prideaux's Connexion, Vol. II. Book v.

ferent individuals. It is enough that the Catholic Church received them not. Epiphanius enumerates eighty, Augustin more, distinct heresies which grew up together with the Gospel.¹ They seem generally to have had a pseudo-philosophical origin ; and Apollinarius,² though himself perhaps not free from error, endeavours to show at large from what sects of philosophy the various heresies among Christians took their rise. Epiphanius, too, often traces heresy to philosophizing ; and Arnobius and his disciple Lactantius are very severe against philosophy, as the source of corruption in doctrine. But most important it is for us to observe, that none of these many "doctrines of men" were held by the Catholic Church : they were the opinions of particular individuals or sects, and were not embraced by the general body of Churches descended from the Apostles. But yet, let no one think it uninteresting to be informed of particulars such as these ; they are indices by which our conduct may be guided in all times of abounding sectarianism. These sects have all passed away ; but the Catholic

¹ Jewel's Apology, p. 61.

² Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia. Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 26, and lib. v. cap. 15, 18. See also Hist. of Montanism, p. 215, and the answer to it, entitled "General Delusions," &c. p. 334, (part iii. cap. 4, cent. ii. iii.)

Church still remains—the “gates of hell,” as Christ promised, “have not prevailed against it.”

Let it not, however, be imagined, that the early sects were all of small importance, or had but few adherents, or were unsanctioned by great names, and even some distinguished Churches. The Marcionites and Montanists in the second century; the Sabellians, Manichees, and others in the third, were but too numerous: and, to take a still more painful example, in the learned and zealous Church of Alexandria, the fascinations of false philosophy were fearfully successful in seducing multitudes from the “simplicity that is in Christ.” A corrupt species of Platonism was brought to explain the mysteries of the faith, and a system of scriptural interpretation introduced, not simply unsound in itself, but capable of almost unlimited abuse.¹ Never were the words of inspiration more fatally and painfully fulfilled: “The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,” 1 Cor. iii. 19. The Alexandrian school eventually led the way to the Arian controversy in the fourth century. The enemies of the truth were able to represent the high mysteries of the Christian Faith as if they had been

¹ Bellarmine de Scrip. Eccles. sec. 3.

derived from the philosophy of the academy ; while, on the other hand, the Alexandrian Church indulged in a dangerous mysticism which proved but too contagious to the neighbouring Churches.¹

But the Catholic Church, as a body, never received the reveries of Neoplatonism, or any other false philosophy ; it was peculiar to certain individuals and Churches. And even when the Catholic Bishops and Fathers met together at the² first general council, and condemned the Arian heresy, they only stated, as we see in the Nicene Creed, the facts and doctrines which they had been taught to believe. The philosophy of those doctrines they did not enter into ; they recorded what had been received in each of their many Churches, from the Apostle who first founded it. They said, We believe in this manner concerning God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The how ? or the why ? they did not say. Thus at this time was the Catholic Church a witness against the False philosophy of the Arian who would have extinguished the truth, and of the mystic who obscured its brightness by pretended explanations.

¹ Hence arose the Origenistæ, the Origenians, the Valesci, and other heretics of that age and the following.

² Bellarmine, lib. i. de Concil. cap. 5.

The philosophizing of the first ages seemed rather designed to make Christianity acceptable to the heathen ;¹ but it was at length adopted by Christians, to render their faith, as they thought, more intelligible to themselves.² Hence arose the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian controversy in the fifth century, on which I will simply remark, that both the orthodox and the new-doctrinists gave way to false philosophy ; the latter in assailing, the former in defending, the truth. The Pelagian heresy, indeed, was founded wholly by a specious philosophizing spirit ; but it would have been well indeed, if Augustin had used no false philosophic arguments in defence of the orthodox truth. The truth so defended was doubtless the faith of the Catholic Church ; but the defensive arguments of Augustin were often peculiarly his own. So that we must hold to his Catholic conclusion, while we must very often doubt his particular premises.

The system of the Eclectics also greatly prevailed. It would be tedious, however, and perhaps useless in this place, to trace False philosophy through the scholastic labyrinth of the following ages. At different times we might find instances

¹ Justin Martyr. Apol. II. p. 83.

² Eusebius Præp. Evang. IV. 22.

of whole councils of Bishops yielding to a philosophizing spirit, and bringing academic or other subtilities to elucidate the mysteries of the cross. But these councils constituted, after all, but a small part of the Church Catholic, which, as a whole, cannot be proved to have ever received the distinctions which resulted from that misapplication of the affected "wisdom of this world." And now that that old philosophy has become exploded, to so great an extent, we surely have reason to rejoice in the wise course in which Christ has faithfully conducted his Holy Church; and it may be our wisdom to trust that Church for the future also. It certainly must be owned that it is impossible for the generality of men to examine well, and balance the conflicting claims of the countless doctrines which have arisen in every age. The majority of Christians have either no leisure or no capacity for a labour like this (more than sufficient to employ the whole life-time even of the learned); and this cannot be necessary for men's salvation. There is a simpler and surer way:—God's Church is the "pillar and ground of truth;" by this all men may be easily guided; with this we know Christ has promised to remain for ever. This hath from the very first protested against all particular opinions

of ingenious teachers, and philosophizing sects and parties.

Even as far back as the times immediately following the Apostles, it had become the Christian profession,—“We believe in the Holy Catholic Church.”¹ It is, therefore, no new doctrine; though, truly, this faith in the Church hath, during the last hundred years, been well-nigh forgotten in England; and whoever now asserts its necessity, speaks unwelcome truth. Too many among us, accustomed to long inertness, will fear that we are “going too far;” and others will not hesitate to misrepresent both our doctrine and our motives. To these latter I shall say nothing: I shall leave them to their consciences and to God; but to the former I can only profess that I have no sympathy with any weak fears of “going too far,” until I go beyond the Apostles and the primitive Church.

And having now made this plain statement of the truth “according to the glorious Gospel of the “Blessed God, which is committed to my trust” (1 Tim. i. 11), I fear that with too much truth

¹ See the testimonies of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Tertullian, in Gaultier's Hist. Chronogr. pp. 208, &c. Also, “Tracts for the Times,” No. XIV. of Records of the Church.—Irenæus.—Also, Note A.

I must use again the language of St. Paul: "They " have not all *obeyed* the Gospel, as Esaias saith, " Lord, who hath believed our report?" and I must ask of you—How many of *you* have obeyed, or how many are now prepared to obey, the truth now laid before you, fearless of what any may say or think of you? It is true that your worldly interests may interfere with it—the spirit of the age may be against it; but is it not plainly God's truth? The spirit of the age—the spirit of this world—has always been against God's truth. But whether it be right to obey man rather than God, judge ye.

Think not, indeed, that it is ours harshly to condemn, even in thought, those who " obey not the whole Gospel," but choose certain parts of it, according as their own fancy, or their teacher, hath taught. It is not for us to judge others; but let us try to be safe ourselves. Is it not more likely that the opinions of this or that teacher may be wrong, than that He who loved His Church, and gave Himself for it, should allow it universally to go wrong for the first thousand years? Is it not safer at least—(I say nothing of its peaceful blessedness!) is it not *safer* for any one, who desires to be right at the last, to seek to believe as the Holy Catholic Church hath ever believed?

And what if it should prove true that to *the Church* alone the promise of forgiveness of sins was made, by Him who constituted His truly ordained ministers the medium of His people's pardon?—"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think 'ye have eternal life.'" But search, prepared to "obey." Seek not to discover there a merely abstract creed—a minimum of religion, which may possibly save the soul from final ruin. You *may* mistake it;—therefore neglect nothing. Let a lively faith in HIM who died for sinners, be joined with earnest striving to do all His blessed will, and obey His Holy Church, in all lawful things; as HE hath commanded, and His saints of old have done.

On the first trial, the attempt may seem strange and cold to you; it will so widely differ from the overwrought excitement which is too common now among those who think at all of religion:—but at length it will bring a peace which the world knoweth not of! There is a sacred "rapture of repose" in the consciousness that we have "communion with all saints" of the early Churches, who suffered and died for the faith; and with them have "communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." It is as if we experienced beforehand some of the quiet ecstasies of heaven; having so

intimate a sense of union with the spirits of the departed just, that we feel towards them, even as the still loving members of a separated household might feel, at the prospect of quick re-union, and peace to be disturbed no more. We are parts of the ONE whole forgiven family in heaven and earth ; and for the speedy consummation of our blessedness our heavenly Father hath provided ; and we, on earth remaining, only wait till we are made “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the “saints in light.” “For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing “their trespasses unto them, and hath committed “unto us”—His Church, and Us her Ministers—“The word of Reconciliation,” 2 Cor. v. 19.

II.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, A WITNESS AGAINST ROMISH CORRUPTION.

FROM THE EPISTLE.¹—"Whatsoever things were written aforetime, "were written for our learning; that we through patience and "comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—ROM. xv. 4.

IN the commencement of any enquiry, it is necessary to settle in our own minds certain preliminary questions, respecting the subject proposed. It would be absurd, for instance, to enter on the examination of any particular Revelation, unless we had previously admitted, that a Revelation was a possible thing. Just thus, it would be hopeless to discuss the question of alleged doctrinal corruption, in a Christian Church, with a man who should set out by affirming Infallibility to be necessary to every true Church; or maintain the special Infalli-

¹The Second Week in Advent.

bility of that one Church in particular. It is necessary, therefore, on the present occasion, that we candidly, in the first place, entertain this question,—Have we any reason to believe, that God promised a spiritual Infallibility to any particular Christian Church? or any particular number of combined Churches? On the decision of this question much of the accuracy and truth of our subsequent enquiries and conclusions must, of course, depend. And a question of such vital importance cannot surely be hastily decided by any who desire to know and maintain truth.

For observe ; It is rather a question of principle than of fact. I do not ask you to decide, at once, whether there be now an Infallible Church on earth, or not?—But, whether we are in any way authorized to expect that there *should* be one?—It might be quite true, that there is now a really existing infallible Church of Christ; and yet it might at the same time be true, that the world had no reason to look for it, before it came: just the same as it is true that we meet with an oasis in a desert, though there might be no previous reason to expect it. I do not therefore ask, at first, even for an opinion as to the fact of the present infallibility of the Church of Rome; it is quite possible for any man

to believe in the infallibility of that Church, and yet believe it to be an unpromised and gratuitous blessing from God, bestowed upon the world. Setting aside, then, at present, this question of fact, let us examine chiefly the question of principle. Does Reason, or does the Bible, or does Primitive antiquity authorize us to expect an Infallible Church on earth ?

And, in the first place, arguing from rational grounds alone, I should be apt to conclude, that the certain infallibility of a Church would prevent even the possibility of a moral obedience, or rational faith ; It would leave nothing optional—nothing voluntary. However gratifying the notion of infallible teaching may be to our natural carelessness and inaction in spiritual things, it seems to me to be wholly irreconcilable with a *moral* submission to God's laws. For there can be no virtue, nor even praiseworthy faith, among men, if the knowledge of truth is thus reduced to an involuntary and mechanical sort of certainty. In this case, too, what need could there be of prayer or any other Christian means of knowledge ? And in exact accordance with this reasoning it is found, that a blind reliance on infallible teaching has too often produced moral inactivity among the multi-

tude ; both with those who trust the infallible teaching of a Church ; and those who boast of the infallible teaching of the Spirit. But here leaving this argument which many of you may pursue further for yourselves, from these hints ; let us turn chiefly to the Scriptures.

And, in the absence of all clear theoretical statement there, on this subject, we must examine the history of the case ; and it is observable surely, that of all the numerous Churches mentioned in the New Testament—we do not find one which is represented as secure from error. But, on the contrary, to each and all, there is given some exhortation to faithful diligence and watching, couched in terms wholly inconsistent with the notion of infallibility.

Mark, for instance, the Church of Ephesus whom St. Paul declares to be “ blessed with all spiritual “ blessings in heavenly places in Christ,” Eph. i. 1. Taking leave of this very Church, in the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, he says, “ For I know “ this, that after my departing, shall grievous “ wolves enter in among you, not sparing the “ flock. Also *of your own selves* shall men arise, “ speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples “ after them.—Therefore watch.” Look next to

the rest of the seven Churches of Asia, mentioned in the Apocalypse. To all, save one, threatenings and warnings are given, for the symptoms of defection and fallibility already too manifest. And even that one exception, the Church of Smyrna, of whose purity the blessed Ignatius speaks so highly, is reminded of a "synagogue of Satan" among them, and exhorted—"be thou faithful."

It is notorious that the Churches of Judea and Samaria were, in the Apostles' days, especially infected with Judaizing heresies: but observe also, consecutively, each of the Churches to whom St. Paul addressed his Epistles. Writing to the Church of Rome, he says (chap. xi. 20) of them, and of the Gentile churches generally (making no exception of any one in particular), "Thou wilt say then, The branches (the Jews) were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well: because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith! Be not high-minded, but *fear!* For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* (observe! this is in the letter to the ROMAN Church) lest he spare not thee! Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but to wards thee, goodness; IF THOU CONTINUE IN HIS

“GOODNESS, otherwise, THOU ALSO SHALT BE CUT
“OFF!” Would this have been said to the Church
of Rome, if the Apostle had wished it to be believed
that that Church was to be infallible? I cannot
think it. I am not now saying whether that
Church be infallible or not; but I must think that
this passage would lead no man to expect it; and
might lead many to expect the reverse.

Look next to the Corinthian Church. After
“rebuking them very sharply,” St. Paul even
bids them, in the last chapter, “to examine them-
selves “whether they were in the faith” at all.
This was surely therefore no infallible Church.
Neither was that of Galatia, whom the Apostle
thus addresses at the very first chapter; “I marvel
“that ye are so soon removed from him who called
“you into the grace of Christ unto another Gos-
“pel!” The Colossian Church is especially warned
of its danger (ch. ii.) from the heresies of the Gnos-
tics and Essenes. To the Thessalonians the Apostle
writes (chap. iii.) thus: “For this cause, when I
“could no longer forbear, I sent to know your
“faith, lest by some means the tempter have
“tempted you, and our labour be in vain.” And
even among his beloved Philippians the same
Apostle found some who were, as he expresses it,

“ otherwise minded,” and he exhorts them ; “ Do all things without murmuring and disputing,” Phil. ii. 14.—Thus far, then, I find no reason to think that any particular Church was then infallible, either in doctrine or practice ; or was expected to be so. For none of the Churches mentioned in the Scriptures appear to have had any such attribute either in possession or in promise. It must therefore, at least, be confessed to be strange, that the infallibility of the Church, a matter of such importance, if true, was not even alluded to by the sacred writers.

In the Fathers of the first age there is the same lack of evidence in favour of this notion of Infallibility. Not one of the Apostolic Fathers—No Catholic Doctors before the fourth century—(I might say much later) said one word about it :—And no single Church in all that time appears to have made any pretension to it, or to have thought it necessary. This again makes it still a stronger case against the supporters of Infallibility.¹ Some Churches were indeed exalted above others, by primitive purity, by gifts, and by Christian graces, and even by natural position. But we find that each Church confessed alike to agree with all the

See Note A.

rest, taken in a CATHOLIC manner, and not with one in particular, as being sure of the truth. Of this the chief Fathers of those ages have left ample testimony.¹

Newly established Churches received their ministry and their standard of doctrine from any ancient and Apostolic branch of the Church Catholic, which might be near them; but no spiritual subjection ensued; they were henceforth on an equality, in respect of right and Christian privilege; and all confessed with one voice;—"We believe in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." It no where appears that any one Church, however ancient or pure, had, or exercised, over any other Churches, any acknowledged right of lordship, such as the attribute of Infallibility would doubtless have given.

But it may, perhaps, be argued by many, that even on our own principles, the very reason of the case would, after all, demand that we should have some certainty that the Church to which we belong is a safe guide to the truth; otherwise it would be hard to insist on the duty of obedience to the Church. To this we reply, in accordance with the principles laid down in our first Lecture, that the

¹ See Note B.

criterion of the purity and truth of any particular Church is, its conformity with the general body of Apostolic communities, i. e. the Catholic Church from the beginning. And, though no Church is infallible, it must, in general, be safer to rely on a true branch of the Catholic Church, than on individual judgment. It may be said that this is a less certain test of truth than the simple one furnished by the Church of Rome ; which, in one sense, may be indeed admitted ; but, perhaps, for that very reason this test is better suited to moral agents ; for whom it could hardly be fit, and certainly not profitable, to put a blind and lazy confidence in a Church professedly secure from all error (and it is certain, as we before hinted, that a belief in her own infallibility, instead of benefiting, has been the greatest snare to the Church of Rome herself, and the greatest hinderance to the detection and amendment of acknowledged evils). But, after all, the question is not—Which is now esteemed the more certain test of truth—the Romanists' or ours?—the question is—Which was the *admitted* test—Catholicity ? or, Infallibility ?—Which did the primitive Christians do ? did they profess to believe in the truth of the Holy *Catholic* Church ? or in the particular Infallibility of some *one* Church ? Whoever

professes to think the latter, must do so in ignorance, or in defiance of fact. It has been examined with some care, and it does not appear that the notion of Church infallibility was ever derived from any words of Scripture, or entertained by any Christian Church, or defended by the Catholic Fathers for several hundred years; and until this does appear, and that, too, very plainly, no thinking man who wishes to be right in religion, will choose to rely on a foundation so weak and ill-supported.¹

Bearing in mind, then, that the Catholic Christian world did not expect, and seem to have had no reason to expect, an Infallible Church to be set up, let us consider, even more minutely, the claim of Infallibility set up by the Church of Rome.

Her own opinion as to the nature of her Infallibility has not been authoritatively settled, and has singularly varied at different times. The notions of the Pope's Supremacy, and of the Church's In-

¹ The power at times assumed by Metropolitans in the early Church, may seem at first sight to give some colour to the pretensions of the advocates of Infallibility. It should, however, be borne in mind that the Popes did not assume any greater authority over the Bishops of an Italian province, than did the Patriarchs of Antioch or Constantinople, in their respective districts.—(See the example of St. Chrysostom and the Asiatic Bishops. Sozomen, lib. viii. cap. 6.) None of them, however, ever pretended to any necessary immunity from error. See Note A.

fallibility, commonly coalesce in the vulgar mind. Hence the general and practical belief of the great mass of Romanists, is (and the doctrine is so taught by the Jesuits), that the infallibility resides in the Pope himself, by virtue of his succeeding to St. Peter's chair. But for this circumstance the Catholic Church had not been startled by this announcement at the 17th Council Lateran. "It is of necessity to salvation that all the faithful in Christ be subject to the Pope of Rome, as we are taught by the testimony of divine Scripture, and of the holy Fathers (!) and as it is declared in the constitution of Pope Boniface VII." Which statement comprises, or rather implies, the mixed popular notion of papal Supremacy and Infallibility. The more learned defenders of the Roman Church, Bellarmine and others, aware of the numerous and obvious obstacles to the doctrine that the Church's infallibility resides in the Pope, decide that the infallibility rests with the Pope and a General Council united; and even then extends only to strict matters of Faith. But Popes and Councils unhappily have been at strange variance on matters of great importance to the Faith.¹

¹ Sixtus V. put forth (for instance) an edition of the Bible, as the "pure Vulgate," of which the Council of Trent had spoken; but his

And, indeed, omitting this consideration, if this were the true doctrine of Infallibility, it would follow, that for the first three hundred years there was no infallibility in the Church at all, or that it was a dormant attribute ; because there was no General Council during that time. And, from this fact alone it would appear, that the Holy Catholic Church in the primitive ages, may be regarded as a witness against the notion of infallibility. And for several hundred years afterwards it continued to be so. In the Council, for instance, called at Constantinople towards the close of the seventh century, Honorius, a Bishop of Rome, was condemned and anathematized for holding the Monothelite heresy ; and this decision was not called in question ; nor was the infallibility of the Roman See alleged as a screen for the Bishop's heresy.

The Pope of Rome, indeed, seems, as we shall hereafter remark, to have acquired a very extensive supremacy over the churches, more especially in the West, long before the claim of Infallibility was set up : for this infallibility, being an evident novelty, was for a long time cautiously advanced, lest the Catholic body should take alarm : and fur-

successor, Gregory XIV. condemned it, and Clement VIII. subsequently published another " Infallible" version.

ther ; the exceeding difficulty of defining wherein it consisted, proved a serious obstacle to its announcement. Thus much, at least, we are justified in affirming, that the Holy Catholic Church, which we profess to take as our guide, did not ever admit the notion of Romish infallibility. It never was a Catholic tenet that any Church of Christ, or any certain number of Churches, was exempt from the liability of error : nor for many centuries, as we have said, was such an exemption pretended to by any Church. It behoves us then to bear in mind, that Holy Scripture and Primitive Antiquity, are alike against such pretension : and thus we shall find, that “ Whatsoever things were written afore-
“ time, were written for our learning : that we,
“ through patience and comfort of the Scriptures,
“ might have hope.”

The members of an infallible Church, if such existed, would have no need of “ patience or comfort of the Scriptures.” These can only be required by Catholics. Let us then “ patiently” and “ Scripturally” examine, by the assistance of what has been “ written aforetime for our learning,” some of those alleged errors which are charged on the Church of Rome ; since a reflecting man cannot but own that that Church may err as well as any other.

I desire not to speak harshly of the opinions or practice of any Church ; more especially a Church descended from St. Peter and St. Paul, as is the Church of Rome ; I wish not to drag exultingly to light the revolting corruptions of any particular time, in order to triumph rudely over detected sin. Invective may please the partizan, but will never convince the erring ; I rather love the gentler and more Christ-like spirit of our sacred poet :¹

“ Speak lightly of our sister’s fall !

“ Who knows, if tender love

“ Will win her, at our patient call,

“ The *surer* path to prove ?”

Nevertheless, I have a serious duty to perform ; believing, as I do, that the Church of Rome has fearfully fallen from the Truth, and even imposed her own corruptions on the Churches which hold communion with her, I cannot refrain from condemning such errors as are adopted *on principle*, and such especially as are pregnant with consequences fatal to the souls of men ; for these, surely, are errors which no honest Christian dares to hide.

And foremost among these we must place all errors respecting the Sacraments of the Gospel ;

¹ Keble.

containing, as they do, so much that is essential and vital to our Religion, being the means of our first initiation into Christ's Church, and of our subsequent growth in grace. If we believe that there is any special blessing from God accompanying either Baptism or the Holy Eucharist ; if we look upon them as more than mere " carnal ordinances," we must necessarily regard with holy jealousy, any thing like tampering with " Christ's mysteries." If, through our own carelessness, or departure from the ancient truth, we come, perchance, to think *too* lightly of, or to receive at all ineffectually, the Holy Sacraments which our Blessed Saviour appointed for our edification, can we pretend to tell how fatal the consequences may be ? Methinks a Christian mind should fear even to risk a profanity ; and, therefore, I would direct your attention to the errors connected with the Holy Sacraments, rather than to any more theoretical points, because they may vitally affect every man's personal religion.

We commence, then, with the Sacrament of Baptism ; and here, let us not dwell on any points of small moment : let us not exaggerate into unpardonable magnitude the superstitious rites with which (as we think) it is encumbered in the Romish Church. Let us not even scrutinize too rigidly the

still more questionable laxity with which it is but too frequently administered among them, even by their laity. We desire not to dispute the general validity of the Sacrament ; but we must protest against the *systematic* neglect of it in the Romanist Churches from the very hour of its administration. The holy Apostles made use of Baptism, in their addresses to the Christian Churches, as the strongest incentive to persevering faith and penitent virtue. They constantly reminded them that “ as many as were “ baptized into Christ had put on Christ !” and exhorted them, “ Grieve not the Holy Spirit of “ God, whereby *ye are sealed* to the day of Redemption !” The Church of Rome adopts another method. Instead of putting men in remembrance of the Baptismal privileges which Christ purchased for his people—instead of “ stirring up” the Baptismal grace which is within them, they have even taught a new Sacrament, which they call “ Penance.” The belief in this has, I greatly fear, wrought more evil to the souls of men than any other Romish error whatsoever. Consider it well. The Church of Rome practically teaches, that deeds of self-denial, mortification, and the like (which are termed Penance), have a sacramental efficacy, apart from the mind and motive of the man who performs

them. Thus, in the place of all those moral means which Christ instituted to affect man's moral nature—in the place of that purification, that cleansing of sin after Baptism, which the Gospel would have effected by “Godly sorrow working repentance unto salvation” in the elect ; the Church of Rome has substituted¹ Penances ; the payment of a certain penalty, pecuniary or otherwise ; the performance of certain acts ; the enduring of certain privations.

If I am now addressing any member of the Roman Church, I would ask him to reflect on the undeniable effect which this doctrine has had on the spiritual condition of the Church. I refer not to any particular era, for the deadening influence which has been so unequivocally and universally felt. The whole history of the Churches in communion with Rome is one massy record of it : and of this, I am persuaded, no candid mind can doubt. But, farther than this, I beseech you to observe how this belief in Sacramental Penances destroys the very essence of the Gospel of Christ. St. Paul declares that “ being justified by Faith we have “ peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” But the introduction of Penances has practically

¹ Just as some modern sects have substituted sudden impulses of thought, or ecstasies of feeling, which they name “ Conversions.”

proved the exclusion of this doctrine, no less than of the Sacrament of Baptism. It surely behoves you to reflect on these serious points. The Catholic Church, for many hundreds of years, did not hold Penance to be a Sacrament.¹ The dreadful effect of considering it such, most certainly has been, to make men trifle with sin, and overlook the only Atonement !

Even the sincere Christian must find that the doctrine of Penance constantly interferes with what St. Paul calls “growing in grace”—being “transformed “in the spirit of the mind”—and “going on to perfection.” Ask yourself, then, whether there be any real moral value in any outward act ; unless it be proved to be Sacramental ?—Then bear in mind that Penance was *not* considered to be such, by the Catholic Church from the beginning—and then decide whether it is not safer to reject this doctrine, and believe, as “*we* believe in the Holy Catholic Church.”

Let us now pass to that which is the highest mystery of our Faith—the Most Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord. And the Romish Errors concerning this, are very far indeed from unimportant. The Doctrine of Tran-

¹ See Note C.

substantiation—The Sacrifice of the Mass—The denial of the Cup to the Laity—are all Anti-Catholic and Unscriptural corruptions.

The doctrine of Transubstantiation does not appear to have been very openly stated before the eleventh century ; and it was then opposed by Berengarius and others, who declared it to be a novelty unknown to the Primitive Catholics. Certainly no branch of the Catholic Church for many hundred years after Christ, appears once to have doubted, that the consecrated bread and wine, remained bread and wine ;¹ notwithstanding the acknowledged real Presence of the body and blood of the Lord, in those holy symbols. It was only as Corruption and Superstition gradually overspread the Church that this error arose ; nor can it be said that it is a harmless one ; since it has given rise to much Infidelity in the world, Idolatry in the Church, and to what, I fear, amounts to blasphemy in the priests—who pretend to be “ makers of God ! ”

The Sacrifice of the Mass is an equally plain novelty and corruption. The Early Fathers doubtless speak of the Eucharist as a sacrifice—but only in a metaphorical sense. I have been unable to

¹ See Note D.

find a single clear passage to contradict this statement—That the Holy Eucharist is a metaphorical sacrifice—but on the contrary, the Fathers of the Catholic Church decisively maintain it.¹ We believe, then, with the Apostle and the Catholic Church that by “*One offering, Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*”

The denial of the Cup to the laity is so undoubted a novelty, that the Romish writers do not attempt to deny it. And this cannot surely be deemed a small matter, a point of slight consequence, by any man who reverently remembers those solemn words of Christ, “*Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, there is no life in you,*” John vi. 53. This cannot but afford matter of very painful reflection to any considerate mind. This denial of the Cup was never made, on principle, till the council of Constance assembled in the fifteenth Century, to settle the claims of the three rival popes who all pretended to be the Infallible Successors of St. Peter, and mutually excommunicated each other. In that Council we find the *first* Authoritative denial of the Cup to the Laity; and be it observed well, that the very decree which enacts this, makes the

¹ See Note E.

admission, That in the Primitive Catholic Church, the Communion was received *in both kinds*. Here, then, the Church of feigned Infallibility is confessedly opposed to the Catholic Church. We are justified therefore in rejecting this, no less than the other Romish Corruptions of the Sacrament of the Eucharist; for "We believe in the "Holy Catholic Church."

Such, then, are some of the errors concerning the Sacraments of Christ into which the Romish Church has fallen. Against these as well as other corruptions and novelties the Church Catholic has borne an unvarying testimony; and her testimony has been largely recorded by those who lived "aforetime, for our learning." Every intelligent Romanist, for instance, may satisfy himself on these points: That the Invocation of Saints; the Worship of Images; and Purgatory (to name no others), are unsanctioned by Catholic antiquity in the first ages. The first of these is a corruption growing out of the Commemorative and Eucharistic prayers for the departed just, such as we retain in the "Prayer for the Church Militant," and the Service for Burial.¹ The two latter

¹ "We praise Thy Holy Name for all thy servants departed this "life," &c., "beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow," &c.—and

are corrupt modifications of Heathenism. But on such particulars as these we cannot here enlarge. One point yet remains to be considered by us—which may close up our review of the Practical and dangerous Errors of the Roman Church—a point of most essential and comprehensive importance to us English Catholics—I mean, the claim of the Bishop of Rome to Supremacy over all other Bishops and Churches. On this almost every thing in this controversy might seem to depend ; but I am sure that the candid Roman Catholic will allow that it is not a point to be yielded *without* evidence. And I have sought most anxiously and, I trust, fairly, for such evidence, in the New Testament, in the Ante-Nicene Fathers and in the Writings of the best controversialists of the Roman Church ; and I honestly profess that I can find no evidence whatever in the Primitive Catholic antiquity for the Supremacy of the see of Rome. A very able advocate of that see has lately appeared in this country ; and I would that his candour were equal to his zeal. For it is the part of an honest opponent not to lay too great a stress on apocryphal facts—fairly to

again (praying for the completer blessedness of the dead), “ That we “ with all those *who are departed* in the true faith . . . may have our “ *perfect consummation and bliss,*” &c.

give up positions which are *proved* untenable—and not to draw larger inferences than the premises of the argument really warrant. It is quite impossible that a man of information and acuteness can be really satisfied with such arguments as are brought by this writer to prove the Papal supremacy. For even if we were to grant that the Scriptures assign to St. Peter such a supremacy over his fellow Apostles, which is very far from being plain (and to my mind does not even seem to admit of proof), still it would not follow from thence, that such a supremacy devolved on the Bishops of Rome; even if they were allowed to be successors of St. Peter: But there is no contemporary evidence to prove that St. Peter was ever in this strict sense of the word Bishop of Rome. We believe indeed that the Church in Rome was founded by St. Peter and St. Paul, and that they were both put to death there. But beyond this, history is almost silent. And I do not think that any writer, before Eusebius, speaks of St. Peter as strictly a Roman Bishop. Now to build the magnificent structure of Papal supremacy on a basis of such very *doubtful* facts at best, cannot be satisfactory to a truth-seeking mind.¹

¹ Note A.

Perhaps the strongest passage of the Fathers, and one of the earliest that is adduced as favouring this doctrine, is from Tertullian, and is quoted thus: "Let us see what Rome has learned; what she hath taught and held in communion with the Churches of Africa." (De Præs. Her. xxxvi.¹) But whoever will read the passage in its connexion, will find, that it militates directly against the Romish position, by ranking the Church of Rome as *one* Church among many. The whole passage stands thus:

"Come now, you that are willing to make a better use of your curiosity in the matters of your salvation; make the round of the Apostolic CHURCHES, in which the very chairs of the Apostles still preside in their places; in which their authentic letters are publicly read, echoing their voice and recalling the person of each. Is Achaia near? you have CORINTH. If you are not far from Macedonia you have PHILIPPI, you have THESSALONICA. If you can go into Asia, you have EPHESUS. If you are in the neighbourhood of Italy, you have ROME; whence

¹The Jesuit Gaultierius quotes only another part of the passage thus: "Felix Ecclesia cui totam doctrinam Apostoli cum suo sanguine profuderunt," p. 208. And again, p. 210, "Si autem Italiam adjaces," &c., omitting the former and principal passage.

“ also for us this (proof of) authority is ready.
“ How happy is that Church to which the Apostles communicated all their doctrine with their blood ; where Peter suffered like his Lord ; where Paul was crowned with the end of John ; where the Apostle John, after he had been plunged unburnt into boiling oil, was banished to the island. Let us see what Rome has learned ; ” &c.

All this indeed we hold to be Catholic doctrine, and our Apostolic Church maintains it, against the sects. But I see not in this, any shadow of support for the high pretensions of Rome. That Church is here placed on the same level with the rest.

I find indeed that a deference was paid to the Bishop of Rome by other Bishops in the first ages ; as the head of a most ancient and honoured Church, but it was ever a voluntary deference and courtesy, and not an exacted obedience. And the reason that this is not now accorded to him by the Reformed Church, is, that he claims it as a *right* —he attempts to tyrannize over us. While he was an ensample to all Christ’s flock, he was held in honour ; when he became a “ tyrant over God’s heritage ” he was resisted as a foe. And before

the Bishop of Rome can hope to recover his ancient position, he must appear in his ancient character. He must preserve the rule of Catholic Unity. He must withdraw his priests and emissaries from the Churches. He must not affect to lord it over other Bishops, but remember what the Catholic Church of the first ages maintained—That every Bishop is the centre of Unity to his own Church. A Bishop who sends forth his priests to molest and divide the Church of another Bishop, is, in the judgment of the Catholic Church, guilty of the worst kind of schism. And when the Bishop of Rome will cleanse himself of this guiltiness, when he will cease to oppress the Churches of Europe, they will not refuse, I think, to assign him the highest post of honour, as, “*primus inter pares*,” as the head of a most ancient Church, which, of old, most faithfully preserved the truth, and should now be “beloved for ‘the Fathers’ sake.” At present, he is opposed to the Catholic Church; and the Catholic Church is a witness against him; and not only him, but his errors. Not one of his new doctrines and corruptions, which chiefly sprung up from the seventh to the sixteenth centuries, ever received Catholic approbation; and the Tridentine Council

whereby he attempted to confirm them was not a Catholic Council. The least plausible of all those errors and corruptions—the worn-out fiction of Infallibility, has even grown into disrepute, more and more, since the day that that Council affirmed it; and until it be honestly laid aside, I see not a hope of uniting in one brotherhood the Church of Rome, with the Churches which are subject thereto, and the rest of the Catholic Church, in the East and the West.

And now let me here ask any Roman Catholic to answer to his own conscience this question: Why is it that I remain a member of the Roman Church while living in England? Think you that any Corinthian or Philippian Christian, in St. Paul's days, would have forsaken the Corinthian or Philippian Church, and held communion only with a foreign Church? If not, why should any English Catholic seek to be a Roman Catholic? Is it that you wish an Apostolic Church? We are as much descended from the Apostles, and by as true and sure a line of succeeding bishops, as the Bishop of Rome himself. If you doubt what I say, examine and you will find it true. Indeed the most learned Jesuits fully allow it. Is it that you consider the Roman Church purer than our's? (though I see

not how any thinking man can imagine that), yet, even that is no reason for your leaving and continuing separate from us : you are bound the rather, on that very ground, to remain among us, and to help to purify us. The Church of Corinth was not so pure as that of Philippi ; but the Corinthians were not, therefore, exhorted to separate, or to commune with a purer Church, but rather to amend their own. There is no solid reason in Scripture, and none in Catholic antiquity, for the universal submission demanded to the authority of the Bishop of Rome, or any other foreign bishop. To the bishops of your own district and country you owe your allegiance, as true Catholics ; “ Obey them “ that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves,” Heb. xiii. ; and God will require it of you. It is your bounden duty, I say, as true Catholics, to return to the bosom of our neglected Mother the Church of England. You are already baptized into Christ ; you have nothing to do but quietly to return, to join in her prayers and services “ with the spirit and understanding,” and to pray God to forgive your past schismatical error, in submitting to a bishop, whom He has not set over you, and so making many of the brethren to offend. Thus by “ patience and comfort of the Scriptures”

(which are constantly read among us), “ you may have hope” of present peace, and future happiness.

Nothing is more common, and yet, nothing surely is more unworthy of us, as Christians, than petty recriminations and jealousies. The English members of the Roman Church frequently justify themselves in remaining so, by singling out, dwelling on, and, perhaps, magnifying the errors and mistakes of the Reformers. This is unworthy of men who desire to know and embrace truth. I have carefully endeavoured to avoid following this example myself in this Lecture. I have not wished to excite prejudice by opening (as might have been opened) some dark pages of the history of the Roman Church. It is very easy to praise highly, or to condemn harshly, in general terms ; but it is unwise and hardly honest. Let us rather, in estimating each other's conduct, put ourselves in the place of our brother, knowing what human nature is. I will not attempt to justify all the acts of the Continental Reformers, or of our own ; yet, it is not surely to be denied by any unprejudiced man, that they had a holy zeal for God and Truth, which may well make us ashamed. I cannot but wish, indeed, that the Continental Reformers had preserved the discreeter moderation of our own countrymen ; but

I am more disposed to thank that God, who gave our Bishops and Reformers the blessing of sober wisdom, than to upbraid the unwise and sometimes intemperate zeal of others, their contemporaries and fellow-labourers.

Let us of the English Catholic Church attempt to understand rightly our true position. As no other Church can lay claim to Infallibility, so neither can we. We are but too far from a perfect Church. Our corruptions have, at various times, fearfully increased upon us; but let us thank God that they have not yet provoked him to "remove the candlestick out of his place." We have, indeed, too much forgotten our Apostolic origin—our Primitive descent—our high and solemn Church prerogatives. The efficacy of the Sacraments has been awfully undervalued among us—the Public prayers have been neglected—even the Sunday service has been so irreverently attended, that the mass of our baptized people (caring chiefly for idle sermon-hearing which costs but little trouble, and is even a sort of amusement to many) omit, without remorse or thought, the overwhelming duty of Confession, with which the daily Church service is commenced; and miss that pardon of sin which Christ's minister then effectually pronounces. They think not (I fear) of the

blessings which they thus lose, coming to the service of the Church long after it has begun ! But I pause—these are fearful evils to which men's eyes are only just beginning to be open ; I pray that we may have grace to amend them. The outward frame-work of the Church doth not need mending half so much as the inward and spiritual condition of the worshippers.

For you, especially, the people of this parish, God forbid that I should not be anxious ! I desire to gather around me a large multitude of holy and acceptable people, to meet their Saviour and Judge at his appearing. Much may be done, I am sure, towards accomplishing this, if we will but look to what was “ written aforetime for our learning”—if we will but strive to unite a holy “ PATIENCE” with a humble seeking of that “ comfort of the Scriptures,” which none but the “ poor in spirit,” none but the “ pure in heart” can hope to know.

We live in an impatient world : the openly ungodly are impatient even of civil controul ; and even among Christians, there is much impatience, which may be more or less sinful. Some are impatient of the aboundings of vice, when they ought rather to be thankful for the long-suffering of God ;

for which of us doth not daily contribute to swell the amount of human sin? Some are impatient of God's providential doings—impatient of “knowing in part”—impatient, it may be, of the authority of God's Church—unwilling to wait, in faith, and see the eventual working of God's hidden plans. Strange!—passing strange it is, that many professing Christians seem to be impatient of every method which God takes to prove them and try them. Impatient of the means of holiness which Christ has given—impatient of oft-repeated prayers—impatient even of monthly Communion! It was not thus of old. The blessed St. Basil, “writing aforetime for our learning,” tells us that in his days the Holy Eucharist was administered four times a week! But things are different now! yet, even the voice of regret is hardly heard among us! And if it were authoritatively proposed, that in some forgotten things we should return to the ancient practice of God's Church, I fear that some of the strongest opposition might be expected even among those who claim a high degree of Christian spirituality or orthodoxy, and at times seem impatiently to wonder that God delays to “visit his people,” and purify his elect. It is plain that the peculiar evils of these times, arise from an

impatient, unsubdued, disobedient spirit. An impatient Christian (O ! strange anomaly !) is certainly an unhappy, peaceless Christian ! True patience, like a lamp of heavenly fire, shineth evermore in the humble heart, as in its proper temple. True Christian patience resteth in quiet confidence on God's love and wisdom, and as some tranquil star sheds its meek light through the often parted clouds of a dark stormy sky—even so the patient faith of the humble spirit doth dwell apart from all the noise and contention of the tempestuous world, serene and undisturbed. “ For yet a little “ while, and He that shall come will come, and will “ not tarry. *Now* the just shall live by faith.”

III.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, A WITNESS AGAINST SCHISM.

FROM THE EPISTLE.¹—" Judge nothing before the time, until the
" Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of dark-
" ness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts ; and then
" shall every man have praise of God."—1 Cor. iv. 5.

Few things are so difficult as to persuade men to renounce long-cherished opinions. To too many it is troublesome to be obliged to think at all carefully on any serious or unusual matter ; a new idea seems almost to bewilder them ; and, when thus bewildered, a mental indolence, or acquired incapacity, prompts them to relapse into the accustomed thoughts of previous years—and, in such cases, men sink into that ease, which they desire more than truth, with a sort of fixed resolve that nothing shall disturb them ; in a spirit very similar to

¹ The Third Week in Advent.

that of a man who should sit torpidly in his house, afraid to examine its condition, lest it should require repairing. We may thus easily account for the slow progress which truth makes in the world. Most minds are adepts in self-bewilderment. The generality, instead of attempting to see the grounds, weigh well the reasons, or even understand the real nature, of truths which seem new to them, set themselves at once to find out "objections," which may form satisfactory excuses for settling down once more in their old opinions. It is to be feared that objections are but too often to be regarded as the mere apologies for intellectual idleness, rather than the doubts which a mind seeking the truth will patiently wait to have solved. The difficulty which most men find in clearly apprehending, or boldly confessing new truths (which mainly arises from the necessity for self-denial), is augmented by the circumstance, that oftentimes their old opinions are in some sort consecrated to them. They are held, perhaps, by those who are justly respected; or they were first inculcated by those who are personally held dear; and to renounce them would be a virtual condemnation of those who still hold them: and such a condemnation might be, nay, certainly would be represented as presumption, or worse, by

a world which careth little for truth, and finds a consolation, and almost a self-justification, in coolly denouncing, or ignorantly despising, those who would give up all things for it. A disinterested pursuit of truth, indeed, the multitude understand not ; but they feel that it practically upbraids their own slothfulness, and, therefore, they hate and slander those who might seem to have it. Such are the natural hinderances to the spread of the truth. I do not, therefore, expect to escape the misrepresentation and censure of the worldly and the self-confident. I do not expect now to convince those, who, even if convicted in conscience, dare not, or will not act on their conviction ; but rather, will be striving all along to make their own case an exception to the general truths which I may set forth (oh ! they forget that this shrinking from truth is known to the Searcher of hearts, though hidden from man !) ; but they who have strength of mind to consider well, and strength of conscience to act on principle ; any who have this evening joined heartily in the prayer of the Church, “ that God would grant us in this world knowledge of His truth,” they are my audience. To such once more I shall gladly speak, though others heed not. I know that if what I now teach is God’s

truth, it must eventually prevail ; and, therefore, I look calmly to the end. Even if all should now reject that which I speak, I shall not regret that I did speak it when I shall come to give up the account of my stewardship of souls. For every minister of Christ's mysteries, when he has long, and very carefully, read, and thought, and prayed over the instruction which he gives to others, may appropriate to himself the language of St. Paul in the immediate connexion of our text :—" It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment . . . Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts ; and then shall every man have praise of God."

In the present Lecture we have to examine an extensive subject, and one which has been much obscured by being needlessly mixed with other matter. Let us remember, then, that we are searching for truth, and not seeking the good-natured applause of unreal charity. Liberality is one thing—Truth is another. We have to consider what is the Scriptural and Catholic truth concerning the Unity

of Christ's Church, and concerning the nature of Schism. We have to decide what opinion must be formed on these points by one who honestly professes—"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church?"

First of all, endeavour to disentangle the subject, in your own minds, from all those disputed points which do not strictly belong to it. Questions which regard the organization of the Church, or its rights, and privileges, and powers, can hardly be discussed now without danger of involving the immediate subject in some doubt and perplexity. I ask you not, therefore, to enter on any such questions—I am anxious that the preliminaries of our argument should be such as are not likely to be disputed by many, if at all.

It will be admitted on all hands, as we showed in the first Lecture, that Christ our Lord did institute a Visible Society of men, whom He called "HIS CHURCH." The first individuals who constituted this Church were Jews; and the Jewish nation had been, up to that time, the "elect people." The conscientious, enlightened, and moral among the heathen, were not indeed excluded from God's mercy; still they were not admitted to equal favours with the Jews. God, for his own inscrutable reasons, had made a division in the human race. He

had put up a "wall of partition," which remained till Christ came; but was then abolished. The wall of partition was then for ever taken down; consequently, among the early instructions of our Lord to His Church, we find this—"Other sheep I have which are not of this (the Jewish) fold; them also I must bring; and there shall be ONE fold and ONE Shepherd." Thus, one of the most gifted of the Apostles states the express object of Christ's Advent to be the re-union of God's long-divided family—"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might gather together in ONE all things in Christ," Ephes. i. 10. The Messiah came not for the nation of the Jews alone, but, that he might gather together in ONE the children of God that were scattered abroad." Christ's mission, then, was that of an elder brother ("for he is not ashamed to call us brethren!") sent by the Heavenly Father to heal the divisions of His earthly family. And when Christ returned to His Father, He left behind Him the CHURCH which He had set up to carry out the designs of His mission. His Ministers were especially commissioned for this purpose—they went forth and laboured to accomplish that prophesied end: "The ONE fold" for the "ONE Shepherd."

And how dear to the heart of Jesus this ONENESS of His people seemed to be, might surely be gathered sufficiently from this simple fact alone,—that He instituted the Church on purpose to effect it. But, as if to remove even the possibility of doubt on a point so vital, this ONENESS was the burden of His Intercessory prayer just before He laid down His life for us. And there is an unusual earnestness and tenderness in the language of the Redeemer, in this prayer, which may well affect the hearts of all who “love him in sincerity.” It was plainly no object of inferior moment for which, at such a time, He poured out His soul in supplication :—“ And now I am no more in the world, I “ come to thee. Holy Father, keep, through thine “ own name, those whom thou hast given me ! that “ they may be ONE as We are.” And again, shortly afterwards,—“ That they all may be ONE, as “ Thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they “ may be ONE in Us.” And again a third and fourth time :—“ The glory which thou gavest me, “ I have given them, that they may be ONE as we “ are ONE ! I in them and thou in me, that they “ may be made perfect in ONE,” John xvii. 11, &c. If any man can listen to these ardent intercessions, and still think lightly of the ONENESS of the Church,

I should be compelled to think lightly of his love for his Lord.

But here it will perhaps be said, the necessity of UNITY in the Church is acknowledged by all ; The question is, ‘ What is the real nature of this ‘ desired Unity ? The principle is admitted ; it is only the interpretation of it which varies.’ Let us, then, endeavour to learn from the Apostolic writings, in what manner the Apostolic Churches interpreted this principle of Christian Unity. Let us see whether they took it to mean a metaphorical Unity ; or a real Unity ? Whether they took it to mean a secret similarity of sentiment and feeling—or a peaceableness of disposition only ?—or whether they thought it included any thing more ?

Now it is first of all worthy of remark—that, according to the New Testament historians, the body of believers in one place invariably constituted ONE Church. This of course is an ascertainable fact, and, for the proof of it, we appeal to the Scriptures. We read, for instance, of “ the CHURCH of God which was at Corinth,” 1 Cor. i. 2 (not the Churches); “ The Church ” at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1 ; Acts xiv. 27. “ The Church ” at Jerusalem, Acts viii. 1. “ The Church ” of

the Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd of Thess. i. 1, and the like. The plural term "Churches" is at the same time appropriated *only* to the Christian Societies of different, separate, or widely extensive districts. Thus we read of the "Churches of Galatia," 1 Cor. xvi. 1; Gal. i. 2; the "Churches of Macedonia," 2 Cor. viii. 1; the "Churches of Judea," Gal. i. 22.—Thus, again, we meet with "the seven Churches in Asia," Rev. i. 4, which however are severally addressed as *ONE* Church;—as, the "Church of Ephesus," and the "Church of Thyatira," the "Church of Philadelphia," &c. Rev. ii. 3. From the uniformity of this method of speaking, it would certainly seem at first sight, that Scripture example would lead us to think that it was the primitive practice for all Christians in one place, to form *ONE* BODY. But let us see whether this notion is fully borne out by the facts of the case.

To commence, then, with the Church of Rome, as it stands first in the Scripture Canon. St. Paul, writing to this Church, says (16th chap. 17th ver.), "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark
" them which cause DIVISIONS and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned:
" and avoid them." It appears, then, that per-

sons had arisen to divide, and make separations, in the body of Christians, that is to say, the "Church" of Rome: and it further appears that though some did this to benefit themselves in a worldly respect, yet they were successful in deluding some well-meaning and unsuspecting Christians; for the Apostle adds: "They that are such (i.e., dividers) serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches (i. e., popular eloquence) deceive the hearts of *the simple*."

Mark next the same Apostle's solemn address to the Church of Corinth, in the very first chapter. "Now I beseech you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the *SAME* thing; and that there be no *divisions* (or Schisms) among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the *SAME* mind, and the *SAME* judgment." Now what does this fully mean? Does it mean merely, 'Be *mentally* united?' or does it mean, 'Do not separate into *parties*? do not follow, or make too much of, particular ministers in the Church?'—Examine it fairly.

The Apostle continues thus: "It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, that there are *contentions* among you:—Every one of you

“ saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of
“ Cephas, and I of Christ.” And again, in the
3rd chapter, pursuing the same subject, “ Whereas
“ there is among you envying and strife, and *divi-*
“ *sions*, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For
“ while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am
“ of Apollos, are ye not carnal?” It is plain
from this, that St. Paul condemned those who
wished to divide the Church of Corinth; he
rebuked them for separating themselves one from
another, and for following favourite ministers,
even though they were ministers of the Church.
It is impossible to close your eyes to the fact,
that the Apostle does here condemn this practice
most strongly, classing it with other sins (to
which it too frequently leads): speaking at the
same time of “ envying, strife, and divisions,” as
affording like proof of “ carnality.”¹ But turn to
another Epistle.

Writing to the Church of Ephesus St. Paul ad-
dresses them as **ONE** Church, and dwells much on
the doctrine of **UNITY**. “ There is **ONE** body, and
“ **ONE** Spirit, even as ye are called with **ONE** hope

¹ They who hurry to strange Churches for the mere purpose of
“ hearing ” a favourite Preacher who is not appointed over *them*, are
therefore guilty of schism, and the principle on which they act, if
followed out, might lead them to quit the Church altogether.

“ of your calling. **ONE** Lord, **ONE** Faith, **ONE** “ Baptism. **ONE** God and Father of all,” Eph. iv. Can any man who reads this, doubt of the meaning which St. Paul put on the prayer of Christ; “ That His Church might be **ONE** ? ” one “ **BODY** ” as well as one spirit?—but further :—

In the epistle to the Philippian Church, there is a strong exhortation to them also to “ stand fast “ with **ONE** spirit and **ONE** mind.” Surely every man must perceive that these expostulations and injunctions for **UNITY** would be utterly useless, at best, if the Unity intended were an invisible thing, as some imagine it. What can we know of either the Unity or the Division of an Invisible body; if indeed the very idea be not an inconsistency?

But perhaps the best proof, that it is a Visible Oneness which is intended, will be found in the rebukes and censure which visit those who violate it; and which are of a kind which, without doubt, would be wholly inapplicable to the violators of any Invisible Unity.¹ “ We command you (the “ faithful) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, “ that ye **WITHDRAW** yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and *not after the*

¹ See Gal. v. 12 ; 1 Thess. v. 14 ; 2 Thess. iii. 14.

“ *tradition which ye have received of us,*” 2 Thess. iii. 6.

I conclude, then, that these passages, illustrative of the history of the Apostolic Churches, are surely decisive on this point—that the body of Christians in *one* place constituted *one* Church, and that it was a grievous sin to separate from it, or in any way to divide it: and concerning those who do so, St. Jude summarily says, “ these are “ they that *separate* themselves, sensual (or *worldly*), not having the Spirit,” Jude 19.

The doctrine now deduced from the Scriptures hath been the doctrine of Christ’s Catholic Church from the beginning. The Christians of one place were always to be one body, however numerous the parts—one Church, however numerous the congregations. And they had not only one Body, but, as we have seen, one Spirit, one Doctrine, and one Baptism.¹ Either to separate from the Body, or from the Doctrine² (i. e. any doctrine about which the Catholic Church had ever spoken with but one voice¹), was to infringe the Catholic UNITY, and be guilty of SCHISM.

¹ See Lecture I., p. 26.

² “Where no ministry, and no ordinances of Christ are, there is no Church; so where the same ministry and the same ordinances are, there is the same Church.”—PEARSON.

But now it may perhaps be asked, Is there after all no case in which separation from a Church may be a duty? And, in reply, I will not say that such a case is impossible, but I will say, that the supposition is so extreme and improbable, that no direction respecting any such case can be found in those Scriptures which we profess to take as our rule. Look thoroughly for yourselves, and judge of the truth of what I now say. You cannot find in all the Bible a single clear precept, or approved example, to justify separating from any Church; even a corrupt one. The Churches addressed in the Apocalypse were very corrupt, but the people were *not* exhorted to withdraw from them, or set up new Teachers, or rebel against the "Angel" or chief ruler. Of one of the Churches (that of Sardis) it is even declared that it "had a name to live and was dead," Rev. iii. 1. Yet to the members of this not merely corrupt but "dead" Church, there is an exhortation to reform, and not to separate. It is obvious, then, that even if (as may be alleged) we are to be guided only by the Spirit of the Scriptures, in the absence of express precept, there must at least be some extreme and overwhelming and manifest necessity—something beyond the positive "deadness" of

the Church—before separation can possibly be justifiable. If ever, indeed, any man shall in his conscience believe, after weighty consideration and much prayer, that by continuing in the communion of any Church he shall peril the salvation of his soul—it need hardly be said, that *he* is bound to separate—and, however mistaken he may be, he is a conscientious dissenter. Be it remembered, however, that, even in this case, he will not find in all the Bible either precept or example to guide him—that it is a condition of dreadful uncertainty to be in—to be cast, with a chart indeed, but as it were without pilot, on a sea of changeful opinions—and further, that this is the *only* case in which separation from the Church can be conceived of as justifiable, for a man who receives the Scriptures.

The force of arguments such as these which have now been used, is not unfrequently evaded by those who will not meet them openly. They say: “These points are not ‘essentials’ after all; they are only ‘matters of discipline.’” But, let me ask, are they sure that they are adequate judges of what is essential and what is not?

Should not the *whole* word of God be a rule to us? I know not what right we have to select a few doctrines or precepts and call them “essen-

tials," and cast aside the rest of the Holy Volume as "less profitable" or "non-essential." Surely our Lord has not revealed any useless truths ; nor did he give any information that some things which he taught were less essential than others ; and I cannot but believe, that the man who simply desires to know and to obey His will, will bow with reverence to the whole of his revealed law ; and not pretend to honour one part by degrading another. For "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; That the man of God may be *perfect*, "thoroughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

But, indeed, it is by no means clear that what are slightly termed "matters of discipline" hold any thing like a second-rate position in the Christian system. Take, for example, the rule of Apostolic ordination, which would doubtless be ranked by many among "matters of discipline."

It is surely of essential and vital consequence to be truly baptized into Christ, and to "eat his flesh and drink his blood with thanksgiving ;" and yet the validity of these sacraments is thought, by many, to depend on Apostolic ordination ; and

in that case, they, who are not ordained by one descended from the Apostles, can have no power to bless a Sacrament. I am not here attempting to prove that this is true ; but I would remind you that it *may* be true ; and I mention it in this place to show, that what is called a “matter of discipline,” is not necessarily un-essential ; and to guard you against the folly of looking on certain parts of Christ’s religion as less important or (for it soon comes to this) unimportant ;—for this is nothing less than pretending to be wiser than our Lord and Master.

But if we may judge from the serious earnestness of the Apostles in condemning Schism, we must conclude that they thought it no light matter. St. Paul, writing to the Galatians, includes “divisions and heresies” in a catalogue of moral offences of the greatest enormity. “The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these : adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness ; idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, varying, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions” (which is the very word translated in the Epistle to the Romans and elsewhere, *divisions*¹), “heresies ; Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like ; of which

¹ διχοστασις, factious dividings.

“ I tell you before, as I have told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” Gal. v. 21. Shall we think, after this, that “ divisions and heresies ” are unimportant things ? But even without this awful statement, I cannot conceive that any man, who seriously reflects on what has been stated this evening, could think it a trivial matter to divide Christ’s ONE fold, which he came expressly to gather together ; to rend in pieces his ONE mystical body—His CHURCH ; for which his prayer of agony was prayed ; his bitter suffering and death endured ! If you truly love Christ, and reverence his word, I know that you must, if you will think seriously of it, hesitate to divide His Church ! You must feel, that it would be a glorious thing if now, as of old, “ the multitude of them that believed were of ONE heart and of ONE soul ”—with “ ONE mind and ONE mouth glorifying God.” —Oh when shall the ransomed family through the wide earth bow, as one man, before their glorified Redeemer ! When shall One harmonious song of deep joy and praise go up to the Lord of hosts !—When shall One Temple serve for our adoration—One court encircle the subjects of the Lord of all !

Let us now attempt to consider the bearing of

the principles thus far laid down, on our own position as members of that branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church which is established in this land. It is sometimes ignorantly said, or more often insinuated, that the English Church was guilty of Schism at the time of the Reformation. Now such an insinuation depends of course on the hypothesis, that the Pope of Rome has a real right to jurisdiction over¹ us, and other Churches; which right has never been proved, and we wholly deny; and, on the contrary, regard it as a most unscriptural, uncatholic, and arrogant assumption.

Take a parallel case. Suppose in the Primitive Church, the Bishop of Ephesus to claim a right to rule over the Bishops of Philippi and Colosse, and to succeed at length in enforcing this claim in defiance of every principle of Catholic Unity, and contrary to both Scripture and Tradition. At length, however, an opportunity offers itself; the Bishops of Philippi and Colosse re-assert their ancient rights to rule in their respective Churches, and shake off the tyranny of Ephesus:—Would it be reasonable to

¹ Augustin, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, was not even consecrated at Rome; though, if he had been, it could not have given the Roman Church any right to rule over us. Augustin was doubtless sent over originally by the Pope; but he received consecration at the hands of the Archbishop of Arles. See p. 69, also see note F.

charge those Bishops with the guilt of Schism for so doing?—Just thus, then, it was, with our English Bishops at the Reformation. They reasserted their ancient rights, and opposed, with success, the usurpations of Rome. The Reformation was the self-purifying act of the whole English Church. It was not the partial doing of a schismatical section. Bishop Jewel, the triumphant defender of the English Church, even at the very time, appealed on this especial ground to the Church of Rome, thus : “ We have restored our “ Church in a provincial synod according to the “ practice of our predecessors and the Holy Fathers.” “ We have AGREED amongst ourselves “ upon all the points and doctrines of the Christian profession of Faith, and with ONE spirit and “ ONE mouth worship God the Father of our Lord “ Jesus Christ.”¹ It had been well indeed for the Church of our land if it had thus continued what it then was. In the very year after this statement was made by the Bishop, Dissent began to appear among us ; and, six years afterwards, the open Schism commenced !

And now I beseech you dispassionately to bear in mind the notices concerning Schism, in St. Paul’s

¹ See Jewel’s Apology.

Epistles, and our conclusions therefrom, while we advert to what at that time took place, and has since continued, in England, and elsewhere.

If the Puritans of Queen Elizabeth's reign were not guilty of the very darkest act of Schism and Rebellion against Christ, I see not how any man could possibly be a schismatic, even if all his life long he laboured to be so. It is easy to magnify their hardships and cast on the Church much of the guilt of the schism; but this is a poor subterfuge.—I say not that the Church was guiltless; but surely there is but little virtue in obedience when all things go smoothly, and as we wish. Consider the real condition of the Church. She had lately reformed herself, and had a host of Popish enemies to combat. The Bishops were zealous on every hand in preaching and defending the truth: they were true Bishops, not simply descended from the Apostles, but endowed with Apostolic zeal and purity. Such was the Church, and such was the time, when the Puritans arose, "speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." How awfully they succeeded, in connexion with disguised Popish emissaries,¹ in dividing and rending the body of the English Church, is too fearfully manifest. Even the sainted Bishop Jewel could

¹ See Notes to Jewel's Apology.

not refrain from thus severely rebuking these unhappy men in his last sermon preached at Paul's Cross: "By whose name shall I call you? I
" would I might call you brethren!—but, alas,
" this heart of yours is not brotherly: I would I
" might call you Christians; but, alas, you are no
" Christians. I know not by what name I shall
" call you. For if you were brethren, you would
" love as brethren; if you were Christians, you
" would agree as Christians."

Contrast, for a moment, with these men, the Reformers of the continent. The principal writers and most distinguished divines among them freely acknowledged the happy condition of the English Church, as being reformed by her own Bishops.¹ Calvin and the French Reformers, Luther and the Germans, alike regretted the necessity of departing from the one Episcopal rule of the Catholic Church; but attempted to justify it purely on the ground of such an urgent necessity as I before alluded to. The Augsburg Confession declares thus: "Here again we desire to testify it to the
" world that we will willingly conserve the Eccle-
" siastical and Canonical government, if only the
" Bishops will cease to exercise cruelty upon our
" Churches. This our will shall *excuse us* before

¹ See Hall's "Episcopacy by Divine Right."

“ God, and before all the world, unto all posterity, “ that it may not be justly imputed unto us, that “ the authority of Bishops is impaired among “ us.” Again, in the Synod of Dort, when the Bishop of Llandaff had urged the preservation of Episcopal Unity—the President of the Assembly replied in the name of the persecuted Churches. “ Alas, we are not so happy !”

Now it is plain that no two things can be more distinct than the English and Continental Schisms. In England a party was made, and it *separated* from the Church, though reformed. Abroad, the body of the Church itself, in different places, complained that it was forced to violate the law of Catholic Unity. Now what was the amount of sin really committed at first by the Foreign Churches, we cannot say. We have to a certain extent admitted, that there may possibly be conceived to be cases in which separation *may* be justified—they pleaded that theirs was *such*. God must judge them ; and he knew all the circumstances which drove them into Schism. They are plainly wrong, however, in not having long ere this restored their Bishops, and so returned to the Unity of the Catholic Church ; but at first they did not mean to violate the unity—they disclaimed it—they were far from seeking to justify their forced Schism. But in England it

was far otherwise ; the English Schismatics of Elizabeth's reign seemed to glory in being what might be strangely and perversely called "conscientious" dividers of the body of Christ ; no point was too insignificant to be magnified into a scruple of conscience. Many had been the sects of the former ages, against the philosophy or the superstitions of which the Catholic Church had borne witness ; but never till the era of the Reformation had so awful an attempt been made to justify Schism itself ; and they who made it, and left to others the sad task of treading in their steps and defending them, will have to answer it at His bar, who will say to many who prophesied in His name—"Depart from me, I never knew you !" For a thousand years and more, such Christian societies as were at that time instituted, were never heard of. The whole Catholic Church,¹ from the beginning, is against them, and hath so continued.

The Puritans did not, and could not, pretend that they periled their souls' salvation by remaining in communion with the Church ; yet they separated ; without finding any warrant of Holy Scripture—in defiance of the prayers of Christ, and the commands

¹ Our own Church even threatens with excommunication those who affirm that Sects are true and lawful Churches. See the 11th Canon.

of his Apostles, in their writings—and the censure of the whole Catholic Church.

Now the Dissenters of our times are the descendants of the Puritans ; but think not that either Christian principle or feeling will allow me to include them all in one general condemnation. Yet I will speak the truth fully, and may God incline your hearts to receive it. Remember, that to be angry with it, will not *disprove* it.

If, as we have seen, it be the duty of the Christians in one place to be one body—if to separate from the body be Schism—if to follow particular ministers and be called after their names, were an act of Schism condemned by St. Paul, I repeat, that I see not how any persons can be more plainly guilty of Schism than the general body of Dissenters are. The very fact of their being called by these names of men, identifies them with the Corinthian dividers of old : but it is certain there are many degrees of guiltiness in the various kinds of separation. Many even of the Puritans, we trust, were sincere, though misguided men ; they were led into their sin by that impatient and rash spirit which still works the same effects. It is forgotten that it is our duty to submit to much which we may not like, rather than rend the body of Christ. And

some men have a morbid desire for a condition of things unattainable in a state of the Church, which was prophesied to have "both tares and wheat growing together until the harvest." They forget the injunction of the text, which particularly refers to the question of faithfulness and unfaithfulness in the ministry of the Church; "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts and then shall every man have praise of God."

I would address myself especially now to Dissenters. I wish to pronounce no specific judgment—I desire you to ascertain for yourselves with prayerful seriousness your own position in the sight of God, with respect to His Holy Church. It is true that the Dissenters of the present day did not begin the Schism; they found it already in existence—perhaps hereditary dissent is not so much felt by the individual as sin. Many who would have been shocked by beginning the separation, are not startled by it when hallowed to them by time and custom. Many, again, are so strictly educated to believe in the peculiarities of their particular sect or minister (their "Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas"), that they never suspect themselves to be possibly

in the wrong ; and the methods too often employed to sustain their faith, are truly painful. The magnified accounts of the zeal of many of their dissenting brethren in distant parts—the perverted notions of conversion, or some other exclusive tenet, which are often entertained, finally combine, with man's natural self-love, to convince them that they are indeed the “peculiar people;” “God's dear children.” So far as all these, and other such circumstances, are involuntary in the individual, we cannot doubt that they are taken into merciful consideration by a just and merciful God ; but in what degree this may diminish or mitigate the sin of individual separatists, or what amount of Christ's blessing may be given to such, we judge not. But the stern and solemn truth must still be told, that Schism in itself is most surely of the nature of sin; and I beseech you to ponder it well. Christ hath purchased to himself ONE glorious Church, and sanctified and cleansed it by the washing of baptismal water, that it might be without spot or blemish before him ! Christ hath purposed that His Church shall be ONE ; and be sure that sooner or later He will accomplish it, and whatsoever opposes it He will destroy. See to it, then, that you are not casting obstacles in His way; attempt not

so vain a thing as to frustrate His purpose ! but honestly dare to begin anew to pray (if thus you have never prayed before), that God would give you grace to embrace His Truth ! And answer to your own conscience this question : ‘ If Dissent ‘ had never been begun, could you have dared to ‘ begin it ?—and if not, how can you venture to ‘ remain in it, and so be the means of transmitting ‘ it to others ?’ Interest is, doubtless, a strong antagonist of Truth—haply you have entered on a course of life which binds you to your sect. You may think it almost an impossibility to return to Christ’s Church ; at least without giving up something which you cannot bring yourself to part with. But is your conscience satisfied with this ?—Pause, and think, and pray !

While you remain divided from us, the Catholic Church condemns you with one voice. Perhaps you satisfy yourselves by thinking that, even though not quite right, you may yet be saved ; but is it not a strange liberality to your souls, to take this sort of chance of salvation ?—We desire to be one with you ; but we dare not meet you half-way. “ As we are allowed of God and put in trust with the Gospel, so we speak, warning every man.” Be sure you cannot vindicate Schism in the slightest

degree, without, at the very least, grieving Christ and offending his Holy Church. If you are prepared to forsake and give up all things, however fair-seeming and long-loved, for Christ's sake, your path is plain. Many of you are already baptized into the Church; you have, therefore, a ready and easy path-way to retrace; God invites you to return as wandering sons; His Church invites you with a mother's love. Some may have a more arduous task to pursue, if they return—those, I mean, who have never been baptized into the Church. But any obstacles are well worth overcoming, to save your souls in the day of the Lord. 'Now, then, as the ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech you by me, I pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God!' 2 Cor. v. 20.

Do you look with doubt and hesitation to the acknowledged imperfections in our Body? I have shown you that the Scriptures do not justify either original or continued separation from a Church, on account of its imperfections. If you come among us, you may help us by your united prayers. And O! that your Saviour's praying voice could reach you now! (It surely might persuade you though I cannot): "Grant, Holy Father, that they all may be one!" Do you distrust His wisdom? or His love?

Or think you not that His plan of Unity, is better than your plan of Division? The Holy Catholic Church, at least in which we believe, hath preferred to follow Christ's rule, and hath echoed from age to age the unanswerable question of His Apostle: "*Is Christ divided?*" If, then, you would believe in the Catholic Church, make not our imperfections any excuse for division. "Judge nothing before the time, "until the Lord come, who both will bring to light "the hidden things of darkness, and will make "manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then "shall every man have praise of God," 1 Cor. iv. 5.

That day is not far distant. Year by year the Church, as at this time, reminds us of it. Soon, very soon, the Lord will come—the Glorified Head of His One glorious Church. Be it ours to prepare to meet Him, and give Him reverent welcome with the ten thousands of his saints!

BE SILENT, every jarring voice!—the Lord is at hand! Be ready, every ear, to catch the first distant sounds of the choirs of coming Seraphim! Be ready, every tongue, to join the unbroken harmony, and swell the Universal gladness of the ONE anthem: "To Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins!"

IV.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, A WITNESS AGAINST RATIONALISM.

FROM THE GOSPEL.¹—"Because thou hast seen . . . thou hast
"believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have
"believed."—JOHN XX. 29.

THE history of mankind, from the first until now, furnishes melancholy proof of the fact, that the moral tendency of our natural mind is to deteriorate. It will not at least be denied, that this is abundantly apparent in that part of man's history which precedes the first Advent of Christ. The Revelation of moral and spiritual truth which was made to our first Father, and traditionally transmitted to his posterity, was gradually corrupted by them, till at length "God looked down "from heaven upon the children of men," and

¹ The Feast of St. Thomas.

pronounced them to be so utterly corrupt, that there were none "that did understand or seek after" Him. When that evil generation was swept off by the flood, there was a fresh enunciation of Religious truth, by the mouth of the righteous Noah; but so rapid was the succeeding corruption, so apparently incurable the tendency to moral deterioration, that, after a few ages, we can scarcely find a single trace of the pure faith and divine morals of patriarchal days. Then Abraham was called out from the degenerate idolaters of Chaldea, and "to him and to his seed were the promises made." But at the end of 400 years, we find his descendants (hardly distinguishable in a moral respect, among the surrounding nations), in a state of moral degeneracy, which was again to be remedied by the re-enactment of divine truth (both in purity of doctrine and strictness of ritual)—the promulgation of both the theoretic and practical law of God, amidst the thunders of Sinai, before the ten thousands of Israel. And yet from that time, the voices of history and of prophecy bear equal testimony to the moral perversity of the favoured nation, so that at the coming of the Messiah, they can hardly be looked on as an exception to the universal moral degradation of a

“world lying in wickedness.” Considering all this, we might, therefore, have thought it probable; even if it had not been foretold, that the same cause, man’s proclivity to evil, would have wrought the same effect in the present dispensation as in the preceding. And I think, that the facts of history will prove, that even under the Christian economy, “Evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse,” and that in the Christian Church each successive form of evil has been an aggravation of the preceding.

It is certain indeed that the false philosophizing of the first few centuries of the Christian era was a great evil; yet it was one almost in its very nature evanescent—likely to decrease either as the human mind advanced in real knowledge, or, as the facts would rather indicate, grew weary of uncongenial error. This philosophizing doubtless wrought incalculable mischief to Christianity, while it was dominant, but it had not in it the elements of perpetuity; and therefore it was a less evil than that which naturally succeeded it, and which was more likely to endure; viz., corrupt Superstition. The reign of Superstition was plainly more permanent than that of False Philosophy, and therefore it was more fatally evil; but even this was not cal-

culated to last. The active mind of man is such that he acquires knowledge, gradually, age by age, however greatly his mental activity may be repressed and his knowledge limited by outward circumstances. If, therefore, his moral and spiritual deterioration are permanently to continue, it will only be by his very mental activity and increasing knowledge becoming the instrument of error, whenever the inevitable time may arrive for shaking off the bonds of indolent superstition. It is as plain that such a time did arrive at the era of the Reformation, as it is certain, that, sooner or later, such a time must have arrived at last. Consequently at that Era, the spirit of evil, Proteus-like, changed its form and allied itself to the new-born activity of the human mind; and hence ensued the thousand schisms and dissensions which have marred and destroyed the Unity of Christian Truth, and made all morals to be doubted and religion to be scoffed at. And inasmuch as the spirit of Schism is, from its very seductive nature, likely to be more lasting than that of the preceding superstition, it is even more to be feared. As Superstition among Christians was more pernicious than false philosophy; so Schism, both in its sceptical nature and infidel consequences, may be

more pernicious than Superstition. But the spirit of Schism has generated, in these latter days, an evil even greater than itself, and now co-existent with it, as well as with the remains of the evils of earlier times. The venturous and unchastened activity of the human mind now avails itself of the rapid advance of experimental knowledge. What is called "Practical Science" is almost looked on as the only real science. Immortal man, forgetting his higher nature, now rather loves to concentrate his thoughts on objects of sense. He will believe nothing ; he must know and comprehend every thing. This rationalizing spirit has invaded the provinces of both Morals and Religion, and the evils which it has produced are (from its alliance with advancing knowledge) likely to be far more lasting—far more fatal—than any which the Church hath yet known. I do not say indeed that even this last form of evil may not have a natural termination. On the contrary, I am inclined to think, that the mind of man will at length intensely feel the vacant insufficiency of this modern Rationalism. Nevertheless it is a form of evil likely to endure much longer than the preceding ; because it is mixed with so much real knowledge of subordinate Truths. And it is not only a

more lasting, but a more fascinating, more presumptuous, and malignant form of error. This strange and revolting disposition to reject, on principle, the highest Truths—viz., those of pure Reason, whether natural or revealed, must at length be productive of Infidelity. And before this wretched evil works its own cure, the End may come; for this tendency of the human mind to seek for sensible knowledge only, and this indisposition to believe, are characteristic of the prophesied close of this dispensation; since it is written, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?”—Still in these, as in other, times, we shall most surely find, that the Catholic Church is the safe Guide of the Faithful—the “pillar and ground of Truth.” Nevertheless, the evil which now assails us is indeed a fearful one. The Church has the difficult duty of protesting against the still surviving evils of the ages that are past, as well as this present. The Catholic Church now bears witness against the remnant of False philosophy—the mass of Superstitious corruption—and the novelties of Schismatic dogmatism,—no less than against the systematic unbelief of modern Rationalism. But we have now, as far as our limits will allow us, especially to examine this spirit of Ration-

alism—which is so peculiarly the spirit of this age ; that we may clearly perceive that course which, as Catholics, we are in these days bound to pursue.

The Rationalizing, and the Catholic, spirits are plainly and even avowedly opposed. The former is self-sufficient—the latter is submissively dependent on God. The former discards all that it cannot comprehend:—the latter acknowledges, “Great is the MYSTERY of godliness.” The former confounds faith with sight, and so destroys the distinctive character of both:—the latter perceives Faith to be the “evidence of things not seen.” The two are strongly and advantageously contrasted by our Lord, in His reply to His incredulous disciple: “Because thou hast seen, thou “hast believed ; blessed are they that have not “seen, and yet have believed.”

Now it is certain, that there is a sense in which it is not only lawful, but necessary, to have a reason for what we believe. We are even commanded to be ready always “to give a reason of the hope “that is in us, with meekness and fear;” and so plain a duty does not require an Apostle’s authority to enforce it. It is the right of every intelligent being to use, to the utmost, every faculty with which he is endowed. It is evident, therefore,

that we cannot find fault with the fullest exercise of this right—it is the unlawful exercise of it only, which we would condemn.

The same amount, or kind, of evidence is not to be had in every case ; it would be unreasonable to expect it. It would be unreasonable to expect the same sort of certainty concerning a fact which took place many centuries ago, as concerning that which took place before your own eyes. We are thought to have the very strongest sensible evidence of any thing of which we are ourselves the personal witnesses. To expect evidence equally strong, or even the same in kind, of an event which took place a hundred years ago, would be to rival the absurdity of a man who should expect to see an odour, or taste a sound—the evidence, in the two cases, must be distinct. While, therefore, we have a right to demand the reason of any thing which we are required to believe, we are bound to rest satisfied with such reason as the nature of the subject admits ; otherwise we are guilty of pre-judging it altogether. For instance, If a man begins his religious enquiries with a determination to believe nothing which he cannot logically prove, and fully comprehend, he *assumes* (what he has no right to assume), that the God of heaven and earth could

not reveal any thing beyond man's power to understand completely; which is the very point in debate.

Even in natural things we acknowledge much which we cannot *prove*. We think a certain object beautiful; perhaps every body thinks it so; but who can strictly *prove* it to be so? Its mathematical proportions admit of strict proof; its sensible qualities may perhaps be allowably said to admit of proof (in a qualified and metaphorical sense of the word); but who can *prove* its beauty?—We undoubtedly recognize it; but neither our sense nor our arguments will prove it. We are certain of the truth of every axiom in Euclid, but we cannot *prove* them—indeed no universal truth, or necessary truth, admits of proof. Our minds perceive all such truths by a direct glance. If any man should require proof that ‘things which are equal to the same are equal to one another,’ he would never get any such proof. If he should find by experience that it had been so, in a million instances, he might infer that there was the highest probability that it would be so in other cases—this is all that his argumentative faculties could do for him; they could not *prove* it. But no rational being requires proof of any such truth—his highest faculty, his pure Reason, directly perceives it.

From all this it may be seen to be unreasonable to look for the same kind of evidence respecting every subject, whether moral or religious. We see that even natural truths do not always admit of proof ; it would be strange, therefore, to demand it for all revealed, i. e. supernatural truths ! Whoever does so, assumes the very point which he ought to establish. We do not object then to reasoning, but to false reasoning. The Catholic reasons, but not in the same method as the Rationalist. He first employs his reason to decide whether the alleged revelation be a real one, and then to understand what its character, and what its distinctive doctrines may be ; and then he submits to it in all things. The Rationalist, having admitted a revelation, subsequently proceeds to theorize upon it, or to criticise, and in a manner correct it ; but, surely, the former is the more *reasonable* course to pursue.

If we admit a Revelation, as coming from God, we cannot neglect any thing which it enjoins ; and if, for example, such a Revelation directs the manner in which it is to be received and interpreted, it is surely reasonable to follow those directions. If the Revelation represents “ the Church ” to be the teacher and guide of the people ; the Catholic sub-

mits to the Church ; the Rationalist must first judge of the propriety of such an institution.

Again, the Catholic finds that some of the truths of Revelation have ever been received by the Universal Church as mysteries ; he, therefore, so receives them, without attempting to comprehend them. The Rationalist must needs first *prove* them, forgetting, that to attempt to prove the highest truths of Revelation, may be as unreasonable as to attempt to prove the first truths of mathematics or morals. The highest truths of nature are apprehended by pure REASON ; they are not capable of proof ; and thus, likewise, we cannot wonder if the highest truths of Revelation are to be apprehended by pure FAITH.

It seems, then, that to rationalize is to reason incorrectly ; to demand proof where proof is impossible ; to seek reasons which the nature of the subject-matter does not admit of.

It would be impossible, in this place, to trace the history of Rationalism in past times (interesting as such an enquiry would be) ; we must confine ourselves to the more practical examination of its present undisguised form, as manifested among us ; and not treat it chronologically or historically ; but rather analytically : and we shall be further con-

vinced as we proceed, that Rationalism is as unreasonable as it is Uncatholic.

The Rationalists may be divided into two general classes—the Spiritualists and the Moralists; who, widely as they may differ from each other as to the details of their creeds (if the term “creed” be not a misnomer for a “system”), singularly agree in their first principles.

One or two examples may make plain both the identity of the principles of the two classes, and the similarity of the consequences which ensue.

It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, that her ministers, descended from the Apostles, are the consecrated medium of God’s grace and mercy to the world; so that the man, on whose head the Spirit of God descended at his ordination, moves on earth, before his fellow-men, an embodied mystery—a living sacrament. The Catholic Church believes, that the Saviour of the world Himself “chose men and ordained them,” John xv. 16, and promised to remain with them “to the world’s end.” We read in the Scriptures that one of the Apostles, when the “time of his departure” drew nigh, finding that he was not to continue here to the “end of the world,” transmitted his commission to another. “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy!”

1 Tim. i. 18, and in a special letter to him on the government of the Church, exhorts him thus:

“ The things thou hast heard of me among many
“ witnesses, *the same commit thou* to faithful
“ men who shall be able to teach *others* also,”

2 Tim. ii. 2. We find from history that the whole Church, for more than a thousand years, received its ministry by transmission from the Apostles; and the Scriptures give us no hint of a new form of religion, or a new ministry, to be set up fifteen hundred years after Christ and his Apostles. Such, then, are the grounds on which the Catholic Church vindicates the high claims of an Apostolic ministry. Now observe the manner in which different classes of Rationalists oppose this doctrine of Apostolicity.

The Spiritualist wants *proof* that a voluntary, or self-sent, or people-sent, ministry is wrong. Some of the Moralists will go much further, and ask proof of the necessity of continuing *any* Ministry. Neither of these classes can “see” what virtue there can be in any man’s hand being laid on the head of another; and therefore they will not “believe.” To suit their new notions, they have then the task of “*explaining*,” as well as they can, those parts of Scripture which oppose them. They

know that it was written to one of the first Bishops, "Stir up the gift that is in thee, by the *putting on of my hands*"—but they think this may be obviated by allowing that 'there might perhaps be some virtue in an *Apostle's hands*.' And, hereupon, when they are reminded that Timothy (who was a Bishop and no Apostle) was exhorted to "*lay his hands*" suddenly on no man, they seem forced to maintain, that the whole ceremony was, after all, only performed to produce an impression on the minds of the people! Thus when a man is determined to Rationalize he will allow neither the Bible nor the Church to stand in his way.

But no two Rationalists, perhaps, proceed in exactly the same manner. Loose reasoners are not to be expected to be consistent with each other. In some minds the Rationalizing process is much more rapid than in others. In many cases it results originally from some particular circumstances of the Individual, and is more a matter of feeling than of thought. Thus it may have happened, that from some cause (as the unworthiness of the Minister, or the unworthiness of the people) the Sacredness of the Ministerial office and character, though derived from God's appointment, have come to be *doubted*. This is the first step; and some men *never go beyond*

this. Others proceed more boldly, and at length deny the Sacredness of the Ministry altogether; and the many, who will “believe” no more than they “see,” soon come to acquiesce in this. And hereupon in different minds, different consequences follow.

Some argue, that if the Ministry be nothing, there may be no great value in the Sacraments which they administer. Soon, therefore, they begin to question the Efficacy of the Sacraments: and, at length, some will go so far as to *deny* it altogether. Henceforth they are spoken of as “mere forms;” and, in time, it will be suggested ‘to be ‘more reasonable to dispense with them altogether.’—Next to this, *all* forms may be attacked; and when they are all removed, the successful Rationalizers may secretly cherish a creed as intellectual, or spiritual, as they please. But I think it would be strange if this Religion did not soon degenerate (according as individual temperament might incline) to conceited carelessness or cold philosophy; that is, Practical Infidelity.

Another class of Rationalists, setting out from the same principles, may argue thus:—If the Apostolic Ministry be nothing, then one man has as good a right to teach Religion as another. And

why not even women, if they wish it? Then why should we go to Church at all? 'Prayers can be 'read at home (as you are sometimes told); you 'need not go to Church *only* to hear them.'—If you forget, or deny, that the true Ministry of the Church gives a Sacramental value to the Services, which nothing else can give them,—if you heed not, or despise, or are careless of receiving, that Absolution of the Confessing Penitent, which precedes the public Prayers of the Church,—if you 'account not of Us as Ministers and 'Stewards of God's manifold mysteries,'—you may follow out your rationalizing principles a little further still; and you will soon find, that Sermons can be read at home, as well as Prayers, and every man at last may feign to bless, at home, even a mock Sacrament for himself! And how long, in this case, Universal Infidelity could be avoided, I leave every sensible man gravely to consider.

Such are some only of the consequences which flow from the Rationalizing principle when applied to this one doctrine of the Apostolic Ministry; among the most fatal of which, you will see, that the sometimes profaned, and, at best, *doubtful* Sacraments, must be classed. This, be assured, is no theoretical consequence: For many sects do not hesitate to

profess, that there is no Sacramental efficacy in either Baptism or the Holy Communion. They *feel* and know, that in the hands of their Unsacramental Ministry, the Sacraments of Christ are nothing ; therefore they decry them altogether ; and call them (what, with them, we readily admit them to be) “mere forms” and “signs ;” and not the “instruments of Grace !” Think us not, then, unduly exalting Our Ministry, when we, with the Apostle, “magnify our office,” and urge on you its solemn claims ; since we are the very “savour of life, or of death,” unto you all. It is true, that you see not above our heads the “tongues of fire.” It is true that no visible glory encircles us as we move among you. It is for us, as our Master, “to be among you as those that serve.” It is true that we sustain not always the high character which becomes God’s servants, and Christ’s ambassadors, and keepers of his mysteries ; yet, with all our weakness and sinfulness, We are His ; and “He hath put this treasure in earthen vessels, “that the excellency of the power might be of God, “and not of us,” 2 Cor. iv. 7. But to *admit* this, is the work of Faith, which trusts God in defiance of all improbabilities ; which asks no reason, but God’s appointment, and seeks no law but His will ;

which, without reasoning or questioning, bows humbly to Christ, when he says to his appointed ministers, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you," John xx. 21.

Let us now pass from what St. Paul calls the "doctrine of the laying on of hands," (Heb. vi. 2,) to consider, briefly, that to which it naturally leads us—The doctrine of the Sacraments. Let us observe the application of the principle of the Rationalists to these Holy Mysteries; and to that which gives them all their value,—the doctrine of the Atonement. And here, again, especially remark, that the principle adopted by the Moralist and the Spiritualist is substantially the same.

The Moral Rationalist complains that 'he cannot comprehend the doctrine of Atonement. He cannot see the connexion between the shedding of the blood of one being, and the forgiveness of the sins of another.' He cannot "see," therefore he will not "believe;" and loses the assured blessedness of those "who see not and yet believe." He knows, indeed, that the received Revelation states, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission," Heb. ix. 22. He knows that it is written, "We have redemption through Christ's blood, even the remission of sins," Eph. i. 7. He knows

that the Catholic Church always believed this without attempting to comprehend it. But he rejects or explains away the creed of the Bible and of the Church, simply because "he cannot comprehend it;" simply because he cannot reconcile it with what he conceives to be the moral character of God, and the general moral System.

On the other hand, the Spiritual Rationalist argues in the same manner concerning those means whereby the benefits of the Atonement are applied to us. He tells us, that he cannot bring himself to believe what he ventures to term so "carnal" a doctrine as Baptismal Regeneration. 'It would make a "carnal ordinance" (for such he assumes it to be) 'essential to salvation; and he cannot see the 'connexion between the water of Baptism and the 'grace of the Spirit—the seal of forgiven sin!' He cannot "see," therefore he will not "believe;" but at times will even ridicule it! It is nothing to him that Christ himself said, "Except "a man be born of water and of the Spirit he "cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 5. He demands, with Nicodemus, "*How* can these things be?" It is nothing that His Apostle declared that the Church is "sanctified by the washing of water by the word," Eph. v. 26, and purged

from the old sins," 2 Peter i. 9. It is nothing that thus the Holy Catholic Church invariably believed for a thousand years. The Scriptures must be "explained"—the Catholic Church set at nought—he will not believe it simply because he cannot comprehend it—cannot reconcile it with what he thinks the spiritual system, or, as he terms it, "the analogy of Faith."

Now it is evident, I say, that in both these cases, the same *principle* is adopted. The Moralist and the Spiritualist "rationalize" alike. They both expect to be able to comprehend and prove, that which cannot, from its very nature, admit of it. Therefore they are unreasonable. The man who should insist on *proof* of the real connexion between the life of a tree, and the ground in which it is planted, would not be more unreasonable, than one who should demand *proof* of the connexion between the Cross of Christ, and the Salvation of men. The former must be apprehended by Sense; the latter by Faith. The man who should require proof of the moral beauty of a certain course of action, would not be more unreasonable than the man who should ask *proof* of the grace of a Sacrament. Neither can be proved. The one is perceived intuitively by reason,—the other by Faith,

which is "the substance of things hoped for, the "evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1. The only reasonable question for us to entertain, on any such point as the virtue of a Sacrament, is—What is simply revealed? What has been taught from the beginning? for "We believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

But the Moralist and the Spiritualist appear to set up man's wisdom as the criterion of God's. They would both improve upon God's plan. They systematize—and then admire the beautiful proportions of the system which they have constructed. They rationalize, and then think they have discovered the exact consistency of God's works of grace and words of truth. Whatever is above them, they bring down, though by different methods, to their own level, and alike determine "to see before they believe." Each is resolved, in his own way, to comprehend God's "system;" or to construct one for Him. And I cannot make much distinction, on this point, between the two classes; for various as the Rationalists may be, in some respects, they all proceed on the same principle; and though the extreme Moralist, alone, carries the principle out, still, wherever that principle exists at all, it infects the whole system. The man whose heart refuses to submit to the "obedi-

ence of Faith," if he had but boldness and consistency of thought, would end in Socinianism.

Spiritualism (as its whole history proves) naturally conducts to Moralism. The Spiritualism of Zuingli and Calvin, on the continent, has terminated in the Moralism of the Modern Rationalists. And, in like manner, the Spiritualism of some apparently Evangelical parties in England, would, if they were consistent, end in the Moralism of the Socinians,¹ which is but Infidelity in disguise. —

The intermediate links, between the highest Spiritualism of the Calvinist, or Arminian, and the lowest Moralism of the Socinian, may easily be traced, in almost any of the Christian doctrines. But let us confine ourselves to that all-important one, which has already been dwelt on — The Atonement. The Spiritualist, no less than the Socinian, seems to wish to understand it, till at last he fancies that he is able. He calls it a "satisfying of the Justice of God," and complaisantly proceeds to ar-

¹ I believe that a large proportion of "General Baptists" are Socinians. The "Congregational Board" have lately shown symptoms of the decline to Socinianism, also; for, in the Statement of their Faith put forth by themselves—they only say that God is revealed "as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"

Calvin, however, was far from denying even the grace of the Sacraments. "*Convenit non inanes esse figuras, sed re ipsâ præstare quid. quid figurant. In Baptismo adesse Spiritus efficaciam ut nos ablui et regeneret.*"—Epist. p. 134.

range the Biblical system in conformity with this idea, which he will probably call "the leading doctrine" of the Scriptures, or in one monopolizing phrase, "The Gospel." Now that the Atonement was indeed a satisfaction, is most true ; but still this also is a mystery and not any "explanation" whatever.—One who is a little more given to rationalize than such a man, and has learned this system, begins, in no long time, to suspect that there is, after all, nothing so evidently "rational" in this notion of "satisfying justice"—so he eventually casts aside this, and considers the Atonement as a "manifestation of God's hatred of sin."—But a still closer thinker will speedily grow dissatisfied with this notion, so far at least as it pretends to be an "explanation," as it hardly seems "rational" to impute to the Deity, so circuitous and cumbersome a method of inculcating so plain a truth ; hence he begins seriously to question the possibility of rejecting the notion of Atonement altogether !—And the steps from such a rejection to a rejection of the Bible, and all religion, are neither many nor widely apart.

Let us now advert to the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, and I mention it last as being the highest of all the Christian mysteries, and the

one most profaned by the Rationalists. Not that this, indeed, is to be thought strange. They who marvel, with Nicodemus, at the minor mystery—the comparatively “earthly” truth of Baptismal Regeneration—will marvel more at being told that the body of Christ was, in a mysterious manner, present at the same time in the heaven of heavens, and on earth among his faithful! And therefore Jesus, the Son of Man, thus spake to Nicodemus: “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?—And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man WHO IS IN HEAVEN;” while, nevertheless, at that moment, he stood there before the eyes of Nicodemus! (See John iii.)

I would have the Spiritualizers, and other Rationalizers, of this Holy Mystery, carefully weigh the latter part of the 6th chapter of St. John’s Gospel. I know that they *must* feel it to be strangely discordant with their own views of this solemn matter; for they seem to think that there is no mystery at all in our Lord’s humanity.—“I am that bread of life which came down from heaven;” and when the rationalizing Jews murmured at this, he continued; “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of

“ Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you : Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day ”—(thus shadowing forth a mysterious connexion between the Holy Communion, and the raising of the saints¹ at the last judgment). He then adds, “ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.” Can we presume to understand this ?—or call it a shadow ?—a figure ? or shall we be “ offended at it,” like those who immediately exclaimed, “ This is a hard saying, who can hear it ? ” The Catholic Church teaches us a humble spirit.—Jesus *said it*, and we believe it. “ His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.” We ask not how it is ; we try not to rationalize, or explain away, Christ’s words. We attempt not to spiritualize them into metaphors. They are realities, and though our understandings “ see not,” our hearts “ believe.”

The Catholic Church has ever believed them to be such. That Church hath, from age to age, retained the Truth of God. She hath guarded the solemn mysteries, without attempting to explain them. Knowing that the highest Truths admit not

¹ Which is also to be perceived in the words of the Church : “ The Body of the Lord . . . preserve thy body and soul to Eternal Life,” &c.

of proof, she hath received them in Faith—she hath asserted them without attempting to demonstrate them (in further corroboration of which I may refer you to the creeds; as for instance, that of St. Athanasius, which states, but does not attempt to *prove*, the doctrine of the Trinity, or even to reconcile its difficulties, or to mitigate its mysteries). “This *is* the Catholic Faith:” and “We believe “in the Holy Catholic Church.”

So far has the spirit of Rationalism prevailed among us, that we shall only find our own personal safety to consist, in closely following the doctrines of the Catholic Church from the first ages. The Gospel for this day is strikingly descriptive of the character of our times. “Except I shall see “in his hands the print of the nails, and put my “finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my “hand into his side, I will not believe!” The whole spirit of this age breathes forth in these words, “I will not believe.”

It is recorded, that before Thomas had arrived at this obstinate and determined unbelief, he had absented himself from the solemn meetings of the Disciples! At the hour of assembling for Prayer, when Jesus came, and “had been seen by them,” and first spake “Peace be unto you”—Thomas

was *not* there ! And I do not wonder that Faith is weak among us, and the "Peace of God" but little known, when the Blessed Spirit, who helpeth our infirmity, is so little invoked ! when our Churches are almost empty at the appointed times of Prayer ! When men are, not now and then, but almost always, too busy, or too careless, to come to Church "only to prayers," they easily fall victims to the Rationalizing spirit of the world, and almost seem thankful to any man who will furnish them with a plausible excuse for stopping away !

You are never so surely guarding against the irreligious Rationalizing spirit, which makes sight the criterion of belief, as when you are joining in the prayers of the "saints and faithful in Christ Jesus." You are surrounded on every hand by bold and subtil enemies of your faith and peace. "Be sober, and watch unto *prayer* !" The "Natural Theologian," finding a God in nature, is fondly exclaiming, "Because I see, I believe !" The Socinian, rejecting every mystery, is boasting, "Because I see, I believe." Others, professing to have discovered the exact harmony of divine Truth, may likewise proclaim, that "because they see, they believe." But, oh heed them not ! Be it your aim to secure the "blessedness" of those, who have not

seen and yet have believed." You are thus treading in the steps of Apostles, and Saints, and Martyrs;—your Faith was their Faith! "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

AND now in drawing these Lectures to a close, I speak to you, in all solemnity yet earnestness of soul, for you who now hear me, and I who speak, may never all meet together again, till we assemble before the Judge of quick and dead! Therefore listen, as for Eternity.—It is impossible that you can examine the countless sects and doctrines which have distracted the world for 1800 years:—and yet you have souls to be saved. Shall it be said of you as of the Apostolic converts, "Ye became followers of the CHURCHES of God?" What is your *safest* course? Will you trust yourself? or will you trust a self-sent Teacher?—Will you submit to the declaration of Scripture that the Church is the "pillar and ground of truth?" or will you refuse to take your lot with the faithful and holy—the Primitive Confessors and Sufferers—the "Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven?" I beseech you, ask God's guidance now—with eyelids closed—the world shut out—in intense and quiet prayer!

Would that I might include you all in the address of St. Paul, in the Epistle for this day: "Now
" then, ye are no more strangers and foreigners,
" but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the
" Household of God ; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus
" Christ himself being the chief corner-stone ; in
" whom all the building, *fitly framed together*,
" groweth into An Holy Temple, in the Lord ; in
" whom *YE* also are *builded together* for an habitation of God through the Spirit !" Eph. ii. 19.

I tell you there is a peaceful security in the Holy Church which elsewhere is unknown. We trust to the love and promise of our Lord ;—we seek not to understand more than He has revealed. " We see not," yet " we believe," and He hath pronounced us "blessed" indeed ; and His blessing is " life for evermore ! "

If you would share our blessedness, " Believe in the Holy Catholic Church." If you would partake in our security, " Believe in the Holy Catholic Church." If you wish to be *safe*, " Believe in the Holy Catholic Church."—Why should you wander, lonely, in the wastes and snares of this doomed world, while, even now, the flood of judgment may be about to be poured out, and while the ark of

CHRIST'S CHURCH is yet open to receive you! Why should you even pause, and hesitate?—Is earth to be weighed against heaven?

Soon, very soon, our Faith shall be exchanged for sight! We who now “know in part” and “see through a glass darkly,” shall know as we are known, and see God face to face! Then shall we who now are “blessed though we see not,” enter into the full blessedness—the Visible presence of the unveiled Godhead. “Our eye shall then be “satisfied with seeing, our ears with hearing”—what now “Eye hath *not* seen, and ear hath not heard!” It doth not yet appear what we *shall* be,” but we know that there remaineth for us a blessedness unspeakable, and passing human thought;—for THOU, O Christ! shalt be there! “Whom *not having seen*, we love! In Whom, “though now we see Thee not, yet *believing*, “we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of “GLORY!”

N O T E S.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

Many passages are, of course, quoted by Romish writers, from the Ante-Nicene fathers, in proof of the notions of Infallibility and Supremacy. The best of those passages are collated by the Jesuit Gaultierius. I have examined them with much care, and find them to be of two kinds ; passages proving the superiority of St. Peter, but *not* affirming that it devolved on the bishops of Rome ; and passages vindicating the immunity of the Church CATHOLIC from vital error. Both which opinions may be held by the reformed churches. Eusebius records the testimony of Irenæus *against* the attempted tyranny of Pope Victor. And Cyprian expressly affirms—"Episcopum ab alio judicari non posse." Exercitat. I. Prof. Deylingii. The best testimonies in favour of the Romish doctrine seem to me to be those of Clement of Alexandria, and Origen ; and for these, as

in other cases, we have to depend on Eusebius, (lib. vi. cap. 11.) writing in the fourth century. But even these do not prove any thing more than a Protestant might admit; and can never satisfy a candid Romanist.

NOTE B.

“The expression Catholic Church must necessarily be understood of the Universal Church, comprehending within its bounds the visible professors of the Christian religion, owning the doctrine delivered by our Saviour and his Apostles, throughout the whole world; who, though necessarily divided into many separate congregations and particular Churches, yet compose but that One General Church, which is affirmed in the creed to be One, Holy, and Catholic: ONE, as to her faith and doctrine; ONE as to her love and charity: for the unity of the Church universal, besides that of faith, included the communion of love and concord between her particular members and Churches; insomuch that the Universal Church *agrees as to the execution of ecclesiastical government*, that whatsoever is justly determined in one Church is not thwarted and contradicted by another. Therefore, the Fathers, in their disputes against heretics, made frequent references unto the faith and doctrine of THE CHURCH; which method is frequently used by Tertullian, in whose works is the

first mention of this clause — ‘ I believe the Holy Catholic Church,’ as an article of the creed (which was afterwards put into it); particularly in his book of Prescriptions against Heretics, he several times refers his readers to the *faith received in the Church*, and admonishes them to reject as lies, whatsoever doctrines were contrary to the truth of the Churches so united.”—*Hist. of the Ap. Creed.*

Some of the strongest instances of the early Fathers’, affirming the general Indefectibility of the CATHOLIC Church, its freedom from vital error, and the duty of obedience to it, are the following :—

Ignatius ad Trall. :—Justin Martyr Apol. ad Anton. Pium.—Irenæus, and Tertullian—(See the “Tracts for the Times;” Records) and Cyprian, in his often-published tract on the UNITY of the Church.

NOTE C.

The Jesuits always write most when they have least to say. Among the voluminous “testimonies” adduced from the Ante-Nicene fathers, in support of the “Sacrament” of Penance, I confess I cannot meet with *one* plausible one. Whoever wishes to consult them for himself, may find them in the book before quoted : Gaultier’s Tabulæ Chrono.

NOTE D.

The treatise of Bishop Cosen (republished in the Oxford Tracts,) on Transubstantiation, has fully exposed its want of evidence, either in Scripture or Catholic antiquity. I was considerably startled, however, by the apparent testimony of Cyril of Jerusalem to this doctrine; on which the Romish writers frequently rest. But the passage from his *Catachesis* has been thoroughly examined and vindicated in the exercitation entitled—“*Cyrillus Hier. a Corruptelis Pontificiis purgatus.*” Prof. Deyling, *Lipsiæ*. In the same volume there is also a valuable exercitation, entitled “*Errorum Pontificiorum Novitas, circa S. Eucharistiam.*”

NOTE E.

The sacrifice of the Mass is unsanctioned by antiquity. No honest man can pretend to be satisfied by the miserable evidence usually adduced. Yet the Council of Trent (Can. II. Sess. 22,) *anathematizes* all who deny it! It was an ancient custom, and one derived from the apostles' days, that none of the faithful should partake of the Holy Eucharist, unless they brought an “offering” (*προσφορά*) of bread, wine, or other things, which were presented at the altar. *ὁ βέλεται* (says

Justin Martyr) διδωσι καὶ τὸ συλλεγόμενον παρὰ τῆς πρῶτης ἁποτίθεται. Tertullian also mentions the same thing. From this, in subsequent times, the Eucharistical service came to be called an "offering." And in the prayers for the Church Militant, read by us at the Communion, we present to God the offerings of the people, saying—"We beseech thee to accept these our alms and *oblations*."—See also Cave's *Primitive Christianity*.

NOTE F.

No scholar, who will examine the controversy at all, pretends to doubt that our line of Bishops is a true one. The Romanists, therefore, generally avoid the topic. Some confusion of thought, however, often arises on the subject of the episcopal succession, from the supposition (which really seems to be entertained by many,) that a bishop is consecrated by a predecessor in the *same* see. Hence it is thought to be an objection to *our* claims of apostolic descent, that our bishops were ordained by those of *another* church; and it is not unfrequently said, that we "derive our orders from the Church of Rome." *Now this is not the fact.* (See Bishop Godwin's Catalogue of our Succession.) It is true, indeed, that some Roman bishops have sometimes consecrated English, and other, bishops, just as some bishops of other churches have consecrated Roman

bishops. But it should be recollected, that no single Church on earth has a private line of solitary succession, to which no other Church has contributed. The popes, or bishops of ROME, for *their own* ordination, are indebted to the bishops of *other* Churches, just in the same manner as other Churches are to them.

It is the glory of the Apostolic succession that it is not particular—but CATHOLIC, flowing through ALL the Churches—which all contribute to swell the mighty stream of pure yet intermingled waters (originally descending from the Fount of Life and Grace, which, 1800 years ago, was opened first for “the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem”). And thus, in the most *vital* sense, every Church is intimately united, by means of its Bishops catholically ordained, to the “Holy Church throughout all the world;” the body Catholic.

*Northgate
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ON THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

PAROCHIAL LECTURES.

(*SECOND SERIES.*)

BY

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PREFACE.

VERY little needs to be said to introduce these Lectures to the reader. They were delivered in Advent last, at Saint Mary's, Newington ; and there is the same reason for publishing, which there then was for writing and preaching them. I desire to assist, as far as I am able, those who are seeking to clear and define their thoughts, respecting the origin, nature, and power of the Christian Ministry. I have aimed only at plainness and fairness in the statement of the argument ; and have adopted

that arrangement of the subject, in which, as far as I can judge, it originally came before my own mind.

In the Dedication of this Volume to the Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, I have acknowledged my great obligation to him for the instruction which I hope I have derived from his writings — an acknowledgment which, happily, I am so far from being singular in making, that I suppose every one who has studied them, might make the same statement. But it is right that I should say, that as I have not learned a lesson by rote, but, from the first, thought patiently and freely for myself, so the Public must not consider the Professor answerable for every opinion which I may have expressed. And it may be well also to add, that the general doctrine here set forth is

not hastily taken up on any man's authority; but was maintained by the writer, both in private and public, as many will bear witness, long before he had the happiness and advantage of being acquainted with the works, or characters, of the present leading Divines of the University of Oxford.

St. Peter's, Walworth, Surrey.

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I.

THE DOCTRINE.

FROM THE EPISTLE ¹.—"How, then, shall they call on HIM in Whom they have not believed?—and, How shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard?—and, How shall they hear without a preacher?—and, How shall they preach except they be SENT?"—ROMANS X. 14.

AT this season of preparation for the ADVENT, the Apostolical Ministry is one of the subjects especially brought before us by the CHURCH, as doubtless peculiarly calculated to fit our minds for the right reception and reverent contemplation of our SAVIOUR's first and second Coming. It would be needless to enlarge on the suitability of the Epistle selected for this Introductory Festival, opening and leading the way, as it does, to those of the whole "glorious company of the

¹ The Feast of St. Andrew.

Apostles." We can scarcely read the passage now quoted, without recognizing at once much of its appropriateness. It contains a brief vindication both of the moral necessity and the Divine authority of the Christian Ministry ; and so plainly, that, to some extent, all must perceive it. But it may be highly profitable to us to draw out and examine with attention the subject, which St. Paul thus lays before us in epitome only ; concerning which we know that there is much diversity of thinking among professing Christians, and, consequently, great danger of wrong thinking.

It is too much the practice of modern theologians to refer to the New Testament, almost as if it were a book of aphorisms ; and so, when a quotation is made therefrom, it seems to be inquired, what meaning it will *bear* ; or what use can be *made* of it ; rather than, what meaning it *must* have had in such a connection ; or what use *must* have been intended, under such circumstances. And hence has resulted this fatal consequence, that the apostolic writings are commonly interpreted by modern opinions, instead of modern opinions being tested by the apostolic writings. There is but too painful evidence of this, in the manner in which some men set about "proving"

their peculiar system by the Scriptures; evidently assuming from the first that their system is *right*, and so (unconsciously, we trust,) sorting and arranging the “best texts” to establish it. Surely an attempt to treat any other ancient book as the Holy Scriptures are thus treated, would not be borne with. Suppose, for example, any disciple of the schools of the modern scepticism should attempt to show, from selected passages of some leading treatise of ancient philosophy, that his own opinions precisely coincided with those of the sage from whom he was quoting; it is evident that he would hereby deceive no one but himself. On a reference to the treatise in question, it would be at once apparent, that it was written by one who held opinions widely different from the modern. Now since, among Christians, there is an universal appeal to the Scriptures, would it not be a rational method of testing the opinions of any of the various classes among us, to inquire, whether it is likely that such writings *would* have proceeded from the pens of men holding such and such opinions? Might we not thus arrive at as sure a conclusion, notwithstanding all arguments from texts and passages, that some nominally Christian opinions now received, were not the opinions of the sacred writers—as that the opinions of Locke were not

the opinions of the ancient Epicureans, notwithstanding the coincidences that might be found? And if it should be seen that any class of opinions exactly harmonizes with the literal writings of the Apostles, so that we may imagine the men who held them to have naturally written what the Apostles wrote; then, should we not have a highly probable argument for the Scriptural character of those opinions? Such an argument will in some degree pervade these Lectures.

Few, perhaps, will fail to perceive some wide difference between that state of mind which is implied by our popular Christianity, and that which is implied by the Apostolic Epistles. The complete unworldliness, the quiet, elevated self-denial, the earnest humility, the obedience on the one hand and authority on the other, which are the evident characteristics of practical Christianity as it appears in the inspired records, are strikingly different from all which we see now in our popular religion; and may at times well suggest the fear that we may have lost much of that faith which the first Christians possessed. And in no particular is this difference more remarkably seen, than in the language held respecting the MINISTRY of the CHURCH; which from its undeniable importance deserves no light considera-

tion. Of course it may be said, that much of the difference of tone respecting the Ministry may be ascribed to the "cessation of apostolic authority strictly so called." But however this be, which we pass for the present, it is apparent to all, that there *is* a difference: and so, men attempt to "account for the fact," rather than deny it. To account, for example, for the "magnified importance" plainly attributed in Holy Scripture to the living voice of an APOSTOLIC MINISTRY, above and beyond, and often without reference to other means of Christian instruction. Not only the plea just mentioned; but other similar ones are urged, as the "change of circumstances," the "alteration in the times," and the like, to account for the fact. How dangerous all such arguments and evasions are, to those who seek a religion exactly, or as nearly as possible, such as the first Christians had, needs scarcely to be urged on any thoughtful mind. For after all these suppositions and reasonings, it will still remain very possible that THE MINISTRY first Divinely set up in the CHURCH, was *not* intended essentially to change with the changing circumstances of this world; very possible that this might have been given as one permanent if not paramount means of grace for mankind, notwithstanding the subsequent introduction of other means, however efficacious

and invaluable. And then, the actually existing ministry, its historical continuity, its unconcealed pretensions, are facts not to be lightly set aside when viewed in connection with this possibility only; even if it were nothing more. How much of Apostolical grace is lost from the ministry, it may be impossible to say; but so also it would be equally impossible to say how much is retained. Hence, it must ever remain the *safest* course for a Christian man to adhere to an Apostolically descended Ministry. Let us not pass too hastily from these thoughts; let us follow them out, into minuter detail; in order to enter into the state of mind apparently implied by language such as that in the passage, for instance, which constitutes our text.

Does it not here seem, by St. Paul's way of putting his questions, leaving them, as it were, to answer themselves in every Christian mind, that they could in his esteem admit of only one answer? That they must conduct people to the inevitable conclusion of the necessity of a LIVING MINISTRY? Modern Christianity would easily find *other* replies; and does so practically. But is there no danger in such a course? No danger in thus *assuming* the sufficiency of what may be termed literary methods of Christian instruction?

nevertheless it is certain, that very often it is assumed. "How shall they believe in HIM of whom they have not *heard*?" "By reading the Bible and judging for themselves," would be the reply of modern Christianity. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" asks the Apostle. And modern believers might truly reply, "We do not see the difficulty—Have we not our Bibles in our hands?" "How shall they preach except they be SENT?" is the inquiry of St. Paul. And, "surely every man who understands his Bible may teach it to another," might be the ready modern reply. To the Apostle's mind, on the contrary, such questions seemed to carry with them their own unavoidable answers, establishing beyond controversy the necessity of an authoritative publishing of the truth by living teachers, and those duly sent (*ἀποσταλῶσι*): nor does the SPIRIT of inspiration (to whom every future change was known) here give any hint of the future change of this system of teaching.

But further: what St. Paul meant by being "sent," or "apostolically commissioned," as well as the high importance which he attached to it, may be gathered from the extreme anxiety with which, at the opening of his Epistles to the Churches, he repeats, and dwells on, the fact of

his own apostolical character ; which is so conspicuous, that the want of such a preface has sometimes been urged as an argument against his authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews¹. “ Paul an APOSTLE of JESUS CHRIST;” “ Paul CALLED to be an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of GOD;” “ Paul an APOSTLE not of men, neither by man,” but “ by the will of GOD.” Such are the beginnings of his Epistles. Nor was such an anxiety at all unnatural in him ; because his apostolical character was not so regularly derived as that of others, and had been greatly disputed in some churches, and so needed constant vindication : of which the Apostle seemed to be well aware. But, on modern principles, this self-vindicating anxiety is quite unintelligible. It never could have been manifested by St. Paul, if he had only thought, “ that every man has a right to be a Christian teacher, whether he has a mission or not, provided he is persuaded of his own ability, and can persuade others of it too.” To one unacquainted with this notion, there certainly would seem to be some powerful difficulty (which others would not see) in this question, “ How shall they preach except they be

¹ Not *justly* so ; because in writing to his own people, there was not perhaps the same necessity for vindicating his apostolate.

“SENT?” And therefore in the next chapter to this which contains these questionings, St. Paul again glances at this topic, and says, “Inasmuch as I am the Apostle (the SENT one) of the Gentiles, I magnify mine OFFICE.” Now, as we have said, it is very easy to reply to all this, that St. Paul’s circumstances were different, and that that will account for the difference of his feelings and language. For even granting this, is it either consistent with a cautious reason, or a Christian humility, to assume in this way, that we are right in differing from St. Paul, provided we can “account for the difference?” Or, supposing that our altered times do account for the difference (as in some sense they do), does it follow that they justify it? Perhaps we may “account for” most of man’s transgressions against God’s law, but does that *justify* them? But let us keep to the case before us. How can we be so sure, that if in the apostolic days the common people had possessed Bibles, and were able to read them, and, in a word, were outwardly circumstanced in all respects as we are, then St. Paul’s principles, and St. Paul’s exhortations, would have been such as ours now are? Have we any right to say, without proof, that St. Paul assigned such an importance to the teaching of a living ministry, *solely* because

Bibles were not plentiful? Might there not have been other reasons? Consider: is it not very conceivable that there might have been that in Christianity which could only be perfectly conveyed by an institution such as the living ministry?—and which, therefore, without that ministry, would not be attained, even though men possessed every other means? Now, without saying that it is so, and not insisting on the probability of it (arising from the analogy¹ of God's past dealings with mankind, and from the very nature of our social condition), it is enough to affirm, that it is very *possible*, very conceivable, that an apostolical ministry might have been made by GOD the perpetual channel of a grace to man, which might be conveyed in no other way. And the possibility of this ought for ever to restrain us from the rash conclusion, that Christian blessings may be sufficiently attained by private reading of the Bible.—If any are inclined to such a conclusion, by the consideration that possibly the apostolic ministry had a miraculous blessing which no ministry had after the Apostles' age; so that language well suited to the first generation of the Christian ministers, may not be suitable now; it might be

¹ See Notes. No. I.

answer enough to point out, that such a supposition remains to be substantiated, and that it must be hazardous to take up with a theory which incurs the risk of realizing *on principle* only a defective Christianity. But more than this may be briefly added, viz.: That as miraculous power was no peculiarly apostolical prerogative (for all ranks of Christians had possessed it), so neither can the want of it argue a deficiency in apostolic grace and ministration; That the Apostles associated with themselves Timotheus, Silvanus, Epaphroditus¹ and others, as possessing the same MINISTRY with themselves, though no miraculous gift; and, That if the same ministry be not to continue for ever in the church, then it would follow that “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,” has not been literally fulfilled; That the words of Scripture which relate to the Church’s Ministry, must not be understood by us as they certainly were by the first Christians, and, consequently, the plain sense of the Bible is not our guide, as it was theirs so far as they possessed it. And so, finally, our Christianity may be proved at last to come short of the standard of Scripture, and be fatally different in some important points from that which was originally given to the world.

¹ Philippians ii. 22. 25.

Nothing which has now been said is intended to call in question the reality of those blessings which GOD may and sometimes does bestow apart from His appointed means, or by some only of those means apart from the rest. But enough has surely been said to admonish men against that easy and off-hand way of getting rid of those texts which imply high apostolic power, by saying, that such passages only suit the primitive days and the Apostles' own ministry. On the other hand, we would not pretend to decide how large an amount of favour may be vouchsafed to those who have not the blessings of a true priesthood. Cornelius, we know, was a just man, and largely acceptable unto GOD, before he saw St. Peter, or received Christian baptism. Some, again, of the earliest disciples had embraced the truth in some degree, before they had heard "whether there was any HOLY GHOST," or had been baptized in the name of JESUS. And when the Philippian Church was deprived of the ministry of St. Paul, they were still admonished to rely on GOD's in-dwelling SPIRIT in the Church, and "much more in the Apostle's absence to work out *their own salvation*." GOD may dispense with His own appointed means, and may supply the lack of them; but man cannot. But if it were right to compare, or contrast, one of GOD's given means of grace with another, it

might perhaps appear that none of them are *so* essential as the Church's MINISTRY, whereby all the rest seem to have been instrumentally preserved. Much which we are too apt think exclusively essential to the existence of Christian truth and purity, had no being in the early Church. It is likely that all essential means of edification would be given to the first generation of believers; and, in fact, was not the most exalted Christian grace possessed in the Church previous to the Christian Scriptures? Whoever will reflect on these points, will at least be prepared seriously to consider, what in primitive days was understood by the ministerial mission to teach,—what the meaning of St. Paul was in such terms as he applied to the ministers of CHRIST? (as that they were the “sent” servants, “stewards of mysteries,” “ALLOWED of GOD and PUT IN TRUST with the Gospel,”) and whether that may not be the true Christian meaning still?—whether, notwithstanding the altered times, there may not be as much meaning now as there ever was in the question, “How shall men preach except they be SENT?”

HERE it may be rejoined, that there are many who acknowledge the necessity of a Ministry in the CHURCH, and who allow that it ought, in all main particulars, to resemble that of the primitive

Christians; nay, who notoriously assign a very high value to such a ministry, as a peculiar means of grace having a peculiar promise of blessing annexed to it, and yet do not acquiesce in the Catholic doctrine concerning it. And would it not be an unfairness to charge such with setting aside the apostolic ministry? or too little esteeming it? Doubtless, it might be. But yet this rather anomalous circumstance, that men who are generally supposed to be somewhat lax, at least, respecting the subject of an authoritative ministry, should also be often thought to give undue prominence to "the Sermon" of a minister, even beyond other means of grace; this, I say, only renders it the more important that we should understand clearly what men mean by a "ministry" in the Church,—what they consider its real powers and chief functions,—and what its special grace and blessing? For it can hardly be questioned, that many think that they believe in a Christian ministry, when they are only believing in a particular minister;—think that they are believing in a MINISTRY, when they are only believing in eloquence. Many make free use of words, when they would shrink from the ideas which they naturally convey; and ascribe a degree of blessing to a ministry, which in strictness of speech they would never think of seriously attributing to

any such cause. And it cannot serve the interests of truth to smooth over really different opinions, by generalized expressions, just "for the sake of peace." The truth is, there is the greatest possible vagueness of belief, or rather opinion, respecting the Christian Ministry, in our times and country especially. There is, perhaps very generally, an indistinct impression, that *something* is required to make a man "a minister of the Gospel;" but what it is, very few would be ready to say: and this may be well looked on as a sort of instinctive testimony of the human mind to the felt truth, "that it is not lawful for any man," on the mere suggestion of his own thoughts, to stand forth as a teacher of religion. Common sense seems thus to make the inquiry, "How shall they preach except they be SENT?"

It is felt universally, that a teacher of religion should have some credentials. The most illiterate, indeed, will often take the word of any man of outwardly respectable appearance, who can manage, with the mixture of a few Scripture phrases, to talk in an incomprehensible way, and look upon him directly as a "minister." The extent of this implicit faith among some classes of sectaries is almost incredible to those who have not personally witnessed it. But yet even these will clothe their ministers with spiritual powers;

and believe their ministrations to convey a grace, and to possess a primitive and apostolical value, such as those very "ministers," if pressed, would formally disown. Hence many persons of these sects are violently shocked, when we deny the validity of their sacraments as the sure channels of God's grace; little thinking that their own ministers do not *suppose* them to be so. And so also the multitude of sects which flourished in this country during the time of the Great Rebellion, owed much of their success to their unscrupulous assertions of a "divine mission;" persuading the people that theirs was the "discipline of CHRIST;" and alleging a "divine right" for every part of it. And yet, notwithstanding this feeling planted in our very nature, that a spiritual ministry must have a spiritual origin, it is astonishing to see the facility with which almost any professed teacher is received. Just as mere ignorance inclines the most illiterate, so the better classes are induced, by indolence or habit, to receive almost any man as a religious instructor. "How their minister *became* a minister?" is a question which seems hardly to have occurred to the majority of people. If a man has only ability enough to obtain a congregation and a chapel, and especially if he assumes the outward appearance and style of a clergyman, and is thought a

“respectable man,” nothing more is generally inquired. But can this satisfy any one who thinks seriously? The Bible describes the Christian Minister in a very solemn way, as the “Savour of life or death” to souls—as being an earthly vessel possessed of a “Heavenly TREASURE,” the weight whereof he was not sufficient to bear! and so, to the first Minister of the Church it was said, “What *thou* shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;” —Whatever this mysterious language implies, are we to take a man to be all this on his own bare word? or on the ground of his personal talents or sincerity?—Or can the people’s support of any man endow him with these awful prerogatives of a Divine Ministry? Can a congregation, however numerous, give what they themselves possess not? Holy Scripture classes together CHRIST’S own MISSION from HIS FATHER; and the APOSTLES’ MISSION from CHRIST. Even the SON of GOD “glorified not Himself” to be made an High Priest. HE began not His ministry till He was divinely pointed out at His baptism, and from that time JESUS began to “preach and to teach.” Even He confessed, “As the FATHER hath SENT ME,” and, as “the FATHER hath given ME commandment,” even “so I do.” And His blessed Apostle said, “GOD was in CHRIST reconciling the world unto Himself, . . . and hath

COMMITTED unto US the ministry of reconciliation ;” and when the same Apostle was “ about to be offered,” and the “ time of his departure was at hand,” he said, “ This charge I COMMIT unto thee, son Timothy ;” and further, “ the same COMMIT thou to faithful men,” who shall TEACH others also. Indeed every Scripture precedent is against the notion so wholly inconsistent with the idea of a “ commission,” that a man may teach in the name of God, without God’s authority so to do. Surely the words of Scripture mean something. “ Pastors,” “ stewards of mysteries,” “ overseers,” “ ambassadors,”—those “ in CHRIST’s stead,” those “ speaking in the person of CHRIST,” those whom the Churches were commanded to “ obey” as “ watchers for souls,” and “ accountable.”—Those who were received as “ angels of GOD,” even “ as JESUS CHRIST ;” “ workers together with GOD,” “ angels of the Churches,” “ stars in CHRIST’s right hand !” Are these the descriptions of an earthly dignity where-with a man of ability may clothe himself? Do they mean less than they say?—or rather do they not powerfully point the question, “ How shall men preach except they be SENT ?”

But notwithstanding the vagueness of the popular creed, it is not to be denied, that those

who think attentively about religion and read their Bible with care, and yet embrace sectarian views, have some way of explaining all these, and similar expressions, so as to bring them, in some degree, into conformity with their particular views. Doubtless some sort of explanation would be *necessary* to give a measure of consistency to their systems. And into the examination of their manifold systems it would be impossible now to enter. Nor is it necessary; it is enough to point out the fundamental error, of having a system, and then "explaining" texts down to that system. And this perhaps may be sufficiently done by glancing chiefly at two classes of the most received theories, with a view of showing that they alike proceed on a common principle, and that (in consequence) instead of taking the words of Scripture as they plainly stand, and accepting them as the Church does, in their full natural meaning, they are obliged to "explain." Such, indeed, we have already said to be our running argument. "Would the sectarians, or would Catholics, have been more likely to employ naturally such and such words?" And more than this we can scarcely attempt on this occasion. Indeed a formal confutation of many such systems as we are now alluding to, would be almost impossible. There is something so indeterminate about them, that

there is no tangible point of attack. The bare denial of an Apostolically descended Ministry is, frequently, all that can be obtained from our opponents. And where we are not presented with this sort of vacuity of belief, we still meet with nothing more than some thin theory of a *possible* ministration, whereby a straining ingenuity attempts to harmonize its own opinions with the facts and statements of Scripture; as if we were set to inquire—what *may* be, or *might be* a system of religious teaching? and not rather, what was from the beginning?

One theory of a Christian ministry maintained, with more or less of distinctness, by very many, is, that none are rightly “sent,” or commissioned to teach CHRIST’s religion, unless they have what is termed an “inward call.” Now, if they mean by this, that every minister of CHRIST ought to be inwardly impressed with the importance of his calling, no one will question it: but they must mean more than this, or their meaning amounts to nothing. Their idea seems to be, that no man has a right to become a “minister,” who has not some overpowering personal conviction of his spiritual destination to the ministerial office, and that this is a sufficient evidence of a true “call” to the office; and in conformity with

this notion they explain every text. Now if any one imagines that he has such evidence of a call within him, it is useless to reason with him. He is clearly beyond that. If he can so persuade himself, he may also persuade himself that all Scripture is on his side; or any thing else. Few, indeed, will be disposed to envy the venturous self-confidence of one who could thus stand forth (with eternity before him) and on his own sole authority profess, "I am an ambassador for CHRIST!"—"I am a 'savour of eternal life and death!'" Not to dwell, too, on the opening thus given to fanaticism of every kind, it is certain also that a man's personal conviction can be no evidence to others; and yet others are interested in the matter. How far his apparent religious success may be so, is another question, which had better be separately examined, and which we shall hereafter consider. But, it is plain, as we have said, and again insist, that a man's personal conviction alone is no sufficient proof for *others* that he is "sent" to preach Christianity. The Apostolic Epistles, every where, imply as St. Paul does in his question to the Roman Church, that the being "sent" was a matter which other men could judge of. It is certain, too, that the Apostles had something *more* at least than an "inward call." They were, according to the Scriptures,

outwardly called, from the very first, by CHRIST Himself. And St. Paul, the only one who was not so, was outwardly called, afterwards, by an express miracle. So that the Bible, and Apostolic example, are alike against the notion of the sufficiency of an inward call. And here it may be collaterally remarked, that, least of all men, can the members of our Church admit this, at the best inadequate, doctrine; for the 23rd Article is emphatically against it. It reads thus:—"It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and SENT to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the LORD'S vineyard." Above all, therefore, the man who holds this doctrine of our Church will see a force which the advocates of the inward call cannot understand in St. Paul's question, "How shall men preach except they be SENT?"

But another notion concerning the Ministry, practically entertained to a very wide extent is, That the Government of a country has the

prerogative of making Ministers of Religion. That this revolting opinion could possibly prevail in a Christian land, is, perhaps, one of the most fearful proofs which could be brought of Pagan ignorance, among nominal believers. And yet, under various modifications, it prevails to an extent scarcely credible. What but this is implied in the expression which we often hear even educated people make use of, "that the State makes Bishops?" What but this is implied in our quiet acquiescence in the notion, that an act of the State may abolish some of our bishopricks? What but this is the ordinary practical interpretation of the phrase, "the Church as by law established?" which sometimes is even cast at us as an acknowledgment that our Church's origin is an Act of Parliament. Is it not true, that many have no other idea of a clergyman, than that he may be better educated, perhaps, than some other teachers, and so is "patronized by the State?" And, is this the idea of a minister of CHRIST which the Bible would give? Is it a doctrine of the first Christians, that men, simply because they are governors, and happen to have civil power, may clothe their fellow men with the awful prerogatives of a Spiritual Mission? Is it a doctrine of the Church of England—when our Article expressly denies to kings all spiritual

authority—and when Queen Elizabeth allowed the oath of supremacy to be taken, with an accompanying declaration to that effect?—It is easy, of course, to construct a theoretical argument to prove, “That the governor of a State is bound to provide religious instruction for the people,”—but certainly such an argument will not prove that the civil governor can give to any man a spiritual AUTHORITY. It can only prove, that it is his duty to seek for a rightly authorized and commissioned instructor, and give him the *additional* worldly advantage of a legal sanction and defence. It may be, that governors should look for and *find* a religious teacher for the people—but they cannot *make* one. Governors must be instructed and saved by the same heavenly means as the people; and neither can rightfully intermeddle with the administration of Divine things. On the leprous forehead of King Uzziah we may read the presumption of those who will so invade the sacred office. (2 Chron. xxvi. 19.) But it would be impossible to draw out more minutely in this place¹ the arguments either for or against the Erastian theory; and we are chiefly concerned to show that it is wholly inconsistent with Scriptural and Pri-

¹ They who would wish to investigate this subject further, may find it fully treated in Leslie's “Case of the Regale and Pontificate.”

mitive doctrine, which taught, that men should "give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; but unto GOD alone the things which are GOD's." The argument which we would, again and again urge, is, Whether the notion of the State commissioning the religious instructor is in harmony with the language of the New Testament? Does not the Christian mind at once revolt from the thought, That a ruler of this world can commission any as ambassadors of the world's SAVIOUR? That the government of any country can by their state-licence empower a man to "bless in the name of the LORD?"—to be a "steward" of Holy mysteries?—to absolve penitents,—and "deliver to Satan" the ungodly? Such was the Minister of CHRIST according to Primitive belief and Scriptural statement; acting "in the person of CHRIST," and marking with holy indignation any who refused to "follow" in his steps. He "fed the flock of GOD," took "the oversight of them," and "stirred up the gift that was within him" by the laying on of hands. These are the very words of Scripture, and they, surely, never would have been thought of, never could have been naturally used by the inspired writers, if they had entertained the thought, that the State could make a man a Christian Minister.

And such a thought certainly was not enter-

tained by the Christians of the first 300 years, any more than by the Apostles; who were not even countenanced by governors, but in things spiritual “resisted unto blood,” and were charged with “turning the world upside down,” rather than submit to men in aught that pertained unto God. Even as late as the fourth century, the great president of the Nicene Council thus declared to the Emperor the Christian doctrine¹: “God has put dominion into your hands. To us He hath entrusted the government of the Church; and as a traitor to you is a rebel to the God who ordained you, so be afraid on your part, lest usurping ecclesiastical power you become guilty of a great sin.” And again: “Meddle not with Church matters; far from advising us about them, rather seek instruction from us.” “Remember that you are a man.” “Fear the day of Judgment.” And nothing can be plainer than the language addressed by St. Hilary to the Arian bishops. “O ye bishops, I pray you, what suffrages did the Apostles make use of? Did *they* receive their dignity from the palace²?” And, after all, this is the unanswerable argument. St. Paul was not received as an Apostle, *because* he was allowed to preach to “Cæsar’s household.” St. Luke was

¹ See Newman’s History of the Arians, p. 347.

² Quoted by Leslie, from Bp. Burnet, p. 30.

not admitted as a Minister simply because he was an educated man. We do not find the enquiry in Scripture or antiquity, How shall men preach except they be "respectable?" or, how shall they preach except they be favoured by the State? or, how shall they preach except they have literary distinctions? Necessary and useful as all these qualifications may be, the distinctive question concerning the Ministry is, "How shall men preach except they be SENT?"

Now we before observed, that the popular notions, such as these just considered, concerning the Christian Ministry, seem, with all their variations, to be the result of a common principle. The principle, that is, of reducing Christianity to a bare code, or system, of intelligible precepts or dogmas. And the advocates of these various notions are obliged, in some way, to lay out of consideration whatever they meet with, in Scripture or elsewhere, which is inconsistent with this principle. The further developement of these remarks may serve more clearly to elicit, and by contrast elucidate the Catholic doctrine of the Ministry.

The advocates, for example, of the "inward call," seem generally to regard CHRIST'S religion

as a code of doctrines ; while the maintainers of a government call, i. e. the Erastians, regard it chiefly as a code of morals. They both “simplify ;” they both systematize ; and their systems, as such, proceed on very similar grounds. The former system would naturally consider all things subsidiary to what is called “the application” of the revealed doctrines to individuals. Whatever agency seems calculated most powerfully to bring home the doctrine to the mind of a man, that is the most desirable ; and with a reference to this, and *as so viewed*, every thing in Scripture is forthwith explained. Thus: Are Christians commanded in Scripture to be ONE ? This system interprets it to mean, that they must have one general “doctrine.” Are we said to be united to CHRIST as “members” to a body ? This system calls it a “metaphor,” designed only to inculcate charity and kindness. Are we said to be saved by the “washing of water ?” This system tells us to understand it “spiritually :” for ‘that the water only represents the SPIRIT.’ In a word, it simply regards Christianity as a divine mental philosophy ; and only values the visible Church as a useful means, in such proportion as it effectually “applies” this to individuals. Of course there are countless varieties of this species of religion, yet they agree in this, that they all regard it as an

abstract code of principle, and whatever they find in the Bible beyond this, they bend to their system in one way or another. Calvinists, Semi-calvinists, Arminians, and Pelagians, all seem to believe in a kind of essence of Christianity, the existence of which in an individual is to be tested by his possession of a sort of religious sense, to which religious sense they indiscriminately apply every expression of Scripture concerning the various states of the true Christian. Accordingly the possessor of this sense is "regenerated," "elect," "enlightened," "renewed," "born again"—and whatever else they can "accommodate" in any verse of the Bible. A new and intangible meaning is found for every term; every thing must be sublimely doctrinal. The very precepts of Holiness are looked on as "consequences," which need not, therefore, be too formally insisted on. The Sacraments of CHRIST are "elevated," or extenuated, into "shadows," and "signs." The Church itself is evaporated into an "invisible" essence!

The other system, that of the Moralist, is rather more difficult thus to maintain and adapt to Scripture. Considering Christianity as a sort of republication of the law of natural morality, with, perhaps, the announcement of the necessity of repentance, and the assurance of consequent for-

givenness with the DEITY ; all beyond this is regarded as mere enthusiasm. The defenders of this system would allow the existence of a Ministry to be exceedingly "useful," and so come to think it the duty of the State to support it. These, like the former class, would maintain a visible Church, because it is "useful;" and so they themselves will go to Church, they tell us, "for example's sake." These, if they are a little educated, soon become Socinians¹, and find it necessary to attribute something much less than inspiration to the Bible, and so avoid its plain testimony against their system ; and then their course is a very plain one. Those of the party who are more ignorant, are generally found lulled in a complete religious torpor, from which it seems almost impossible to wake them ; for if disturbed they only shut their eyes the closer, and more inflexibly, as if it were the duty of "plain Christians," and "sound old Churchmen," to understand nothing.

Now in contrast to these and all other simplifiers of the Catholic truth, we neither would attempt on the one hand, to reduce the Bible to a code of

¹ It has been well remarked, that the consequence of allowing it to be said "that we are a Parliamentary Church," has been, that the higher ranks among us are verging towards

spiritual principles, nor on the other to reject spirituality altogether as extravagance. Consequently we have no need to get rid of any part of Scriptural truth, either by "explanations" or "criticisms." We see that Scripture does declare spiritual doctrines, and that it does enforce practical morals. But we see much more than this in the Bible; for we take it all literally, and plainly. We think that the Scripturally recorded means, for applying the grace of CHRIST's religion are just as divine, and therefore, for aught we know, just as essential, as either the doctrines or precepts of that religion. Neither those doctrines nor precepts may be rightly received, except in connexion with, and as parts of, the WHOLE Divine Revelation; and of this the means of heavenly grace included in the Church, are an undoubted portion. Indeed what may be called the DOCTRINE of the CHURCH, may be seen in a manner to comprehend every other, so that even the truth of the Ministerial Succession is but a part of that DOCTRINE.

It is very easy to mystify a plain subject, and Deism, and the lower to Fanaticism. The former, not believing that there can be much Divine in a religion which they can shape and modify as they please in the Senate. And the other, seeing nothing very "scriptural," or heavenly, in a "State-made" Creed.

to represent that the word CHURCH is of doubtful meaning; but let any reader of the Bible answer this question :—When St. Paul wrote a letter to “the CHURCH of Philippi,” was there any difficulty in deciding whom he meant to address? It is plain that there existed in that city a number of families BAPTIZED in the name of CHRIST; and that number was ruled over by certain spiritual officers; and, as a whole, was called THE CHURCH. Wherever, then, we find a similar body of men, we say, there is a Church. Now, we believe that such bodies of men, so organized, and constituting, in the aggregate, the Church Universal, or Catholic, must exist to the end of the world; because, at the very time when CHRIST promised to set up such an institution, He promised to it a perpetuity. “I will build My CHURCH;” and the “gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” All this we believe simply as it stands, putting no invisible meanings upon it. Wherever, indeed, we meet with a spiritual truth, we receive it; but we desire not to make or imagine one where it exists not, just to carry out an hypothesis of our own.

We know that the spiritual rulers of the CHURCH were made so at first by CHRIST personally, and that all the members of the CHURCH were made so in one way, namely, by Baptism.

(Gal. iii. 27.) We think that to the CHURCH alone the peculiar promises of the Gospel were made. (2 Peter i. 4.) We believe that there was an awful power lodged in the CHURCH, and exercised from the beginning, through her Rulers, a power which, for example, could exclude unworthy members from Communion, and that those so excluded were cut off from the CHURCH's peculiar blessing. (Matt. xviii. 18.) We think that how much soever Excommunication might now be called a "form," it was no mere form in the Apostles' days. (1 Cor. v. 5; Gal. v. 12; 1 Tim. i. 20. and v. 20.) We look with reverence therefore on the powers of the CHURCH, in her Ministers. We dare not hastily pronounce any thing to be "a mere matter of discipline" or "only a form," because we feel that we are ignorant of the mysterious ways of GOD: and none can determine the limit which separates Divine Doctrine and Discipline. In fine, we look upon the CHURCH herself as One Eternal SACRAMENT: the One great outward and visible Institute, set up by CHRIST, conveying to its members His invisible grace, through many consecrated channels.

The permanent continuance of this One CHURCH on earth we see to have been, in point of fact, connected, from the beginning, with One perma-

manent Ministry or Priesthood, with which, at the first, CHRIST the great High Priest promised to be virtually present "to the end of the world." So that, as it was promised that the CHURCH should never be prevailed against; so also that Ministry which was essential to it, should never cease. To the CHURCH we know the New Testament was addressed: and by the CHURCH (with all other means of grace) it was preserved. By the CHURCH's instrumentality we, individually, are brought to that Font where the "stewards of GOD's mysteries" received us to the mystic body of the faithful. By the CHURCH we really are taught in the truth; for notwithstanding every boast of independent thinking, the CHURCH is practically to us, what it was to the first Christians, "the pillar and ground of truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15.) From the CHURCH's voice we learn even the lessons of Holy Scripture. And not only the transmitted Wisdom, but the transmitted Grace of Christ is thus ours; for the CHURCH is the "fulness of Him that filleth all in all!" (Eph. i. 23.)—On our head the CHURCH directs that holy hands be laid. In the CHURCH we obtain that grace, whereby we go on "from strength to strength:" and in our partaking of the mysterious Sacrifice which "showeth forth the LORD's death," glory is given "unto GOD in the

CHURCH, by CHRIST JESUS, throughout all ages." Nay we doubt not, that even "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places there is made known by the CHURCH the manifold wisdom of GOD!"

This is the Catholic faith. We trust in GOD—we rely on His word, and His appointments; as being anxious to recognise His presence among us, as really and truly as the Holy Apostles did, when their LORD stood visibly before them and said, "Lo! I AM WITH YOU always!" And it may safely be left to any man to judge, how far these thoughts and feelings are in harmony with the literal word of GOD. Every one may see that *we* have nothing there to explain away—nothing to "account for." It is such as we might have written ourselves, so far as the sentiments are concerned, to the full extent that those sentiments may be apprehended. How simple and natural to us sounds the injunction, "Obey them that have the Rule over you, for they watch for your souls!" and how awkward, to say the least, when spoken of self-sent teachers, or those whom the people have commissioned and "called."—Believing that the CHURCH is the perpetual depository of those awful gifts, which CHRIST gave to men when He "ascended up on high," know-

ing that He gave some Apostles, "some prophets, some pastors, and teachers," for the perfecting of the saints, "till we all come in the Unity of the faith, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST"—Not doubting that these, CHRIST's gifts, have remained and ever shall remain in His CHURCH; with what thoughts must we regard the CHURCH's Ministry! How can *we* feel the thrilling solemnity of St. Paul's exclamation, after he had absolved the Corinthian penitent, "SUCH TRUST have we through CHRIST to GOD-ward!"—"SUCH TRUST!"—words may not describe it—"SUCH TRUST!"—"not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of GOD, who also hath MADE US Ministers of the New Testament!" What depth of meaning to us is there in such language as, "Feed the flock of GOD over whom the HOLY GHOST HATH MADE you overseers!" We feel that we are using it in the Apostle's divine sense—yes, the very same solemn sense! All systematizers are obliged to put some lower diluted meaning upon it! And not on this alone, but on every similar text of the Sacred Word! Which of them can say, in the same sense as the Apostles did, of the Ministers of CHRIST, that they are "Workers together with GOD?"—Let any man revolve in his mind all those words so copiously quoted already, concerning the

unearthly responsibilities of those who have to "save themselves, and them that hear them." Let a man deeply think of his SAVIOUR's words, "I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven," "He that heareth you heareth Me," and he will feel it strange mockery, to apply such language to a minister self-authorized, or commissioned by civil governors; and he will come to feel, as the believers in an Apostolic Ministry feel, the power of the question; "How shall men preach except they be SENT?"

Having now thus far explained the nature of the Catholic Doctrine of the Ministry; not attempting to prove it by theoretical arguments, but simply to contrast it with other doctrines, and compare it with Scripture; it remains for us, next to consider the means whereby this Ministry hath been continued in the Church; and for this purpose we must state the Doctrine of the SUCCESSION. The Evidences of the doctrine, and the Objections urged against it, we must reserve to the following lectures.

It is affirmed, that before the Apostles quitted the field of their earthly labours, they appointed "Successors;" and "laying their hands" on them, transmitted all the Apostolical power which they

had received from CHRIST. It is not supposed that the gift of Apostolical Ordination contained necessarily any such grace, as is ordinarily understood by the term miraculous ; though many who were ordained at first, might of course have possessed likewise such miraculous gifts, as were very common to all classes of believers in the early Church. It is also on record, that the ordained Successors of the Apostles, before *they* also died, bequeathed their power and authority to others, by the same ceremony of “laying on of hands.” And it is not denied by any, that the same practice has universally prevailed from that time to the present. These Apostolical Successors throughout the whole Church, were deemed the centres of Unity, and sources of Sacramental grace to their respective communities, dioceses, or Churches. They were looked upon as Chief Embassadors of CHRIST—Vicegerents of the SAVIOUR of mankind—all, in a word, which St. Peter and St. Paul claimed to be:—Divinely “SENT.” (1 Tim. i. 12. ii. 7.) They were at first called by various names,—Apostles, Superintendents, Angels, and Bishops; but eventually this latter designation prevailed. From these Bishops every other officer of the Church derived his power, and “without the Bishop,” to use the words of St. Ignatius, the contemporary of the Apostles, it was not lawful to do

any thing in the Church. Finally, for more than a thousand years there was no Church in all the world which was not so governed by Apostolically descended Bishops.

Such is an outline of the Doctrine of the Succession. A minuter consideration of its details will necessarily follow on, when we investigate the EVIDENCE, in our next lecture. The solemn consequences of the Doctrine itself, are such as may well dispose us to approach the examination with all seriousness of soul. For on the one hand, if we reject the Succession, it follows, that we have not left on earth any real Ministry of CHRIST; while if we admit it, we admit it with all its exclusive claims. Hard things may be said of the choice of such a subject, and the revival of such an inquiry, but the overwhelming importance of it will be a sufficient vindication to every reflecting mind seeking for truth. The time is come when questions like these may not be suffered to remain undecided. When Romanism has advanced so rapidly among us, making boast of its exclusive Apostolic claims, dare we be silent? If we will care not to show our people our Divine claims on their spiritual allegiance, can we wonder that they revolt to Rome? Might we not expect the very "stones to cry out against us?" In truth,

in very truth, we have been silent too long! And the meagre Christianity now prevalent on all hands, gives fatal evidence against us. Christians seem to have forgotten that they are already the members of an Eternal community!—Well may we ask, Are these the elect of God?—His chosen heritage?—with the unseen wall of fire around them, and an uncared-for glory in the midst? Yes, Christians seem almost wholly to have forgotten their endowment of manifold gifts—almost forgotten the “taste of the good word of God, and the Powers of the world to come,” (Heb. vi. 4.) so that it may appear well nigh impossible to “renew them again to repentance!” But shall the Churches venture thus to await, without an effort, the Second Coming of the LORD?—God forbid! “Whoso hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches”—“REMEMBER from whence thou art fallen! and repent! and do the FIRST works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou REPENT!”

II.

THE EVIDENCE.

FROM THE GOSPEL¹.—"It is written, My house shall be called the house of Prayer."—Matt. xxi. 13.

THESE words may serve to suggest some profitable reflections, preparatory to our entering on the subject of the present lecture. They are the words of an inspired prophecy, applied directly by our blessed LORD Himself to the then existing temple of the Jews. If we read them as they stand in the Old Testament, among other glorious predictions concerning the sanctuary of the LORD God of Israel, we are naturally inclined to expect some more illustrious fulfilment of them, than seems to have been ever vouchsafed to the "house of Prayer" at Jerusalem. The words of Isaiah (and the evangelist St. Mark has more exactly quoted them) are, "My house shall be called an house of Prayer, *for all people*;" a prophecy apparently equivalent, or nearly so, in magnitude to that of holy David, "*all nations* whom Thou hast

¹ The first week in Advent.

made shall COME and worship before Thee, O LORD, and shall glorify Thy name !" And it is very evident that this was never realized in the fullest extent, with respect to the Jewish Temple. Must we say then that the prophecy did not refer at all to the literal temple in Judea ? None, perhaps, would venture so to affirm, seeing that our LORD Himself refers it to that temple. Thus much however we are bound to conclude, that this example shows us, how little we are able to decide beforehand what amount, or kind of fulfilment, a Divine prediction may have. And the fact, that our LORD spoke of the temple, such it was then, as GOD's house, may serve also to check any over-hasty accusations of total apostasy, in consequence of extreme degeneracy among His people. It may be useful here to premise this, because it is not unusual to prejudice all enquiry, concerning the Catholic doctrine of the Ministry of the Christian Temple, by a precipitate and comprehensive assertion of its inconsistency with the spirituality and dignity of the Divine designs ; an assertion generally supported by unmeasured charges of a corruption fatally destructive of the Divine sanction, of the Sacred character of any institute. Granting that the present state of the Apostolically descended Ministry in the Church Universal, is very far from what *we* should have

anticipated, from some of the statements of Scripture, it would not follow, it seems, that those statements are frustrated, but only that we had misinterpreted them. It would not follow, that the Ministry is not truly CHRIST's, but only that it needs His purifying. Our LORD came to His temple of old, of which such "glorious things" had been spoken, and He found it a "den of thieves," but still claimed it as His own, in the glowing words of the prophecy, "MY house shall be called the house of Prayer." It was not the glorious pile that Solomon had reared—it was not that which the returned children of the captivity had built; and its Priesthood stood not forth conspicuous for holiness. The beautiful courts of that temple had been restored and rebuilt by the crime-stained Herod; and they had been horribly polluted by violence and outrage. The sanguinary story of the "forty and six years" when that structure was building, is truly a lesson full of melancholy warning! and when at last CHRIST came to the holy mount, He found there a temple, well nigh built in blood and served by murderers; and yet He began to "purge it," and said of it, MY HOUSE! "MY HOUSE shall be called the house of Prayer!"

But do we say this to justify aught in the present

condition of the Church Catholic? God forbid! for though we trust it is not so deeply fallen as was the Jewish Church, "our enemies themselves being judges," yet we would not hide from ourselves our real state. But we bring forward these words of our LORD, and the reflections that have thus arisen out of them, in order to induce men to look calmly and fairly at the Evidence for our Christian Ministry, not hastily prejudging the question, in consequence of apparent moral and spiritual difficulties, (of which they may be making a wrong estimate and use,) but simply postponing, for a while, the objections which may be raised, and separately and honestly looking at the proof and certainty of the FACT of APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION. Should it be asked, Why we attach such importance to an institution, which, even if real, seems to have accomplished so little? we reply, That we pretend not to be able to estimate the workings or the results of God's plans. It is enough for us that they *are* God's. And all we desire is, to ascertain the fact. But we have something further, on which our faith may repose. There are prophecies concerning God's Church, (and perhaps our text is one,) which seem as yet to have had but little fulfilment. Haply that is to be done to the Church at the second Advent, which the purging of the temple, at the first Advent, only prefigured.

It appears but little likely that that brief significant act of CHRIST, from which nothing seemed to follow, was the whole fulfilment of the illustrious prophecy of Malachi concerning the LORD's "Coming suddenly to His Temple" to purify it. It requires no proof that *we* need such purifying. Is the main impression now formed of the Christian temple—that it is a "house of Prayer?" It is written, "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered in My name, and a pure Offering¹." Hath this been yet accomplished? That which is written shall surely come to pass:—and on this our faith relies. And though there be no signs of a present fulfilment—though we may be told that "thieves and robbers" have made lawless entrance, and that very little betokens a Divine presence—a consecrated Priesthood or a "pure Offering" among us, our faith is unmoved. A cleansing must come:—for "it is written, MY house SHALL BE called the house of PRAYER."

In our last Lecture we attempted to show, that not a regularly Succeeding Ministry, but rather a self-commissioned one, is the really in-

¹ This prophecy seems taken by the ancient Fathers to refer to the Holy Eucharist.

credible thing ; and we endeavoured to give an outline of the Catholic doctrine of the Succession. In proceeding now to consider the Evidence of that Succession, we shall not dwell on those traces of the doctrine and the fact which we think are to be found in the New Testament : for several reasons. In the first place, this has been so often and so fully done¹, that it would be a superfluous labour. And then there is a felt unsatisfactoriness in all such arguments. Scripture was not written critically, and its terms were not precisely fixed ; so that several of the sects may and do build up plausible theories from passages of Scripture. And again, what we have already shown, amounts perhaps to all that is of any real value in any such arguments : viz. that the Catholic doctrine is not only in perfect *harmony* with every part of Scripture, but admits of a full and literal interpretation of all its strongest and most solemn language on this subject, in a manner which no sectarian doctrine can pretend to. So far as Scripture then is concerned, we feel no difficulty ; and we now attempt no argument. Our object is a very distinct one. Any man who reads the New Testament, may see that it contains a “ doctrine of

¹ It may be sufficient perhaps to refer to “ Hey’s Threefold Ministry,” as a synopsis of the Scriptural view of the subject.

laying on of hands." (Acts xiii. 3, 4; 1 Tim. v. 22; Heb. vi. 2.) Some may even perceive that the appointed and usual means of transmitting Ministerial authority, was this "Laying on of hands," and that none had power to use this means save the Apostles and those whom they authorized. (1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6; Tit. i. 5.) Many a man may go so far as to admit the fact, that no Ministry was received in the Christian Church for a thousand years, and more¹, except that which was commissioned through the Apostles and their reputed Successors, the Bishops. And yet any such may still feel difficulty in the question—something almost amounting to a deficiency, at least, of clear Evidence. He may fairly be harassed by doubts such as these: "How am I to know after all, that all these bishops from age to age were truly ordained by a true Apostolic predecessor? Is it not both possible, and probable, that in some places, for example, a powerful man might have usurped authority in a Church, and made himself a Bishop?—Or a learned man, in 'dark times,' have imposed on the ignorant? And if so, would not all his Ministerial acts be worthless? And might not one such break in the chain, at some early period, have invalidated all subsequent Ordinations? Are there then any posi-

¹ See Bishop Hall's *Episcopacy by Divine right*.

tive proofs that such has not been the case? Where are the documents? What is the EVIDENCE of the facts, on which an intelligent man may rely¹?" All which questions are perfectly fair, and deserve to be honestly entertained. And to these (rather as connected with the fact than the doctrine) we address ourselves.

Perhaps, indeed, there is a brief answer to them all, which may at once satisfy many, better than a more tedious proof: namely, that if the "doctrine of laying on of hands," and the transmitted Ministry, be received as contained in Scripture, and taught ever by the Church, so the very same Holy Volume contains also the promise that CHRIST would be with His Ministers to the end of time; and He would therefore of course preserve to them all that was in the least degree essential. The faithfulness of CHRIST Himself would thus be a mighty proof to the humblest Christian, that all that Scripture inculcated as necessary to the Ministry, would truly be preserved in the Christian Church, as much as it formerly was in the Jewish. And he might also have this additional proof of the fact, that no one (not even infidels) would attempt to

¹ See Notes, No. II.

disprove it. But we will now endeavour to go a little more narrowly into the question, because it is frequently a stumbling block to many.

Let a man begin by analysing his own thoughts, and satisfy himself—first of all, what *kind* and *amount* of evidence he requires of the fact, that every Bishop of an Apostolic line was duly ordained by the “laying on of hands?” Does he expect to see the very documents written at the time, —and the seal and sign manual of those who were present?—or, would that suffice? Perhaps many may be disposed to think that such evidence must be satisfactory to the most incredulous. But pause, and consider: how should we know for certain that each separate document was quite authentic? How could we be quite sure that none were forged by some crafty monk during those mysterious times, which some people, (as if excusing their own want of light on the matter,) speak of as “dark ages?” Or, suppose any one, or two, or three of the documents were destroyed by all-corroding time? or had become illegible? What then? Surely such evidence would be thought very unsafe to rely on. Most persons would look with great suspicion on such an array of unknown manuscripts, and look about for something more satisfactory and possible. And

perhaps, then, it might not be amiss to inquire what kind, or amount of evidence it would be reasonable to look for ?

Will it not be reckoned enough, if it should appear, that we have as good evidence of the Succession of the Ministry from the first, as we have of the reality of the institution of the Sacraments ? or of the authenticity of Holy Scripture ? This methinks will be enough at least for Christian men in general, though it may not be satisfactory to every disputer ; and if we will attentively look into it we may certainly find the evidence to be quite as strong as this. The very same objections might be brought against the Apostolic Scriptures, the Apostolic Sacraments, and the Apostolic Ministry. We have the same kind of moral certainty of them all : and perhaps it might even be argued, that the highest degree of such certainty, if a difference could be admitted, pertains to the latter.—Thus much, at least, must be apparent on a very little reflection, that the kind and amount of evidence which some persons expect to have given them, of the Apostolic Succession, is impossible in the very nature of things, and exactly similar to the evidence which uneducated people, when they first begin to inquire, expect to find for the authenticity of the Bible, and

which infidels craftily demand for all Revelation, well knowing that it cannot, in the nature of things, be had. For, in the first place, we can none of us have the same kind of certainty concerning any fact transacted in our absence, as of what is done in our presence; much less of any thing which happened in a distant place, a foreign country, or before we were born. And still less if it be removed farther back; as before our fathers or great-grandfathers were born. Whoever, therefore, undertakes to believe no farther than he personally sees and knows, must suspend his faith in all history, and even in the daily conversations and transactions of those around him. And if any man is in this humour, we will not argue with him about it. It is plain that these notions of strict personal evidence for every thing must be abated, if we would exercise our common sense.

Let us take the case of a man who begins to examine the claims of the Bible to be received as the Word of God. Suppose him to be not very learned; he is able at least to see that *his* Bible is like other people's: and they, many of them being educated persons, believe it to be God's Word. This is something. And then it is the Authorized Version, sanctioned by the Church

and the State. And this is something more. And he sees that even those who abuse the Church, are either very bad men, or if they are sincere, well-meaning sort of people, and set up a new Religion for themselves, they are obliged, after all, to make use of the Church's Bible, and generally the Church's own Translation. He therefore has even so far tolerable ground for thinking that the Book which he has received as the Word of God is truly such.

Now we do not in the least question that all this, taken in connexion with the Internal excellence of The Volume, is very good evidence for the generality to rely on. It is just as good as, or perhaps better than, they can get for any fact of history, or common knowledge, or daily life. It is not demonstration—but it is sufficient, probable evidence—such as men take and act upon in every other matter, without thinking it a hardship, or unsafe. And we affirm that this is just the kind and amount of evidence which any man in this country may have either for the Apostolic Sacraments, or the Apostolic Ministry of the Church. He knows that his Church is the Church of his forefathers; and that they were baptized in it by her Ministers, before meeting-houses were thought of; that the learned and the good have abounded in it,

as all allow ; and that even those who depart from it, generally retain some similar outward forms both of Sacraments and Ministry, though (consciously and candidly) they own them to be then without any necessary grace in them. So that he regards his Church as a FACT borne witness to on all hands ; a sure and stable REALITY. Over and above all which, there is an Internal evidence also of Catholic Truth, which the humble and obedient surely possess at length. (John vii. 17.) For the Catholic Church teaches that the Baptismal grace of Regeneration, if watered by prayer and holy teaching, will at length expand into a certainty of persuasion of Her sacred institutes, (Prov. iv. 18 ; 2 Tim. i. 12.) which heresy will labour vainly to destroy. A blessed feeling, akin to the indestructible reverence of a child for its Mother, from whose lips the first words of prayer were learned, and the first peaceful hopes of heaven.

But, going beyond this case, take that of a man who can enter with sufficient care into the literary evidences of the truth of the Bible. If skilled in its languages, he will go at once to the printed editions of the originals. Then he must inquire, from what manuscripts the received text was printed ? And he will find it stated, that that of the New Testament, for instance, is one of about

the year eleven or twelve hundred. And for that fact he has to rely on the critical skill of certain scholars and editors, some of whom saw the manuscript, and thought it to be of that age. But next comes the question: where are the ORIGINAL manuscripts? And it then appears that they are *lost*. Then where are the copies first taken? or even *soon* taken, from the manuscripts? and it seems that these are *lost* too. How then is he to prove that the manuscript from which our New Testament is translated is a faithful copy of what was written nearly eighteen hundred years before, and so unfortunately lost? He has thereupon a laborious task before him. He must trace, for instance, the various quotations in the writings of the Fathers of the Church; and then compare them with some early translations. In connexion with which, he might observe the reverence with which Holy Scripture is always treated in the primitive writings; and that the exact names of all the Sacred Treatises are preserved alike, in various places. And by pursuing these and kindred methods, he will at length arrive at a strong probable conclusion as to the genuineness and authenticity of the Holy Volume: a conclusion continually accumulating in power and becoming at last morally irresistible, and practically equivalent to a demonstration. He sees, in fact, that

there are certain phenomena which can be explained by one hypothesis, and one only, and that therefore that one must be admitted. The actual state of Christian literature can only be explained on the supposition of the existence of some such Divine treatises as our New Testament at the close of the first century.

Now all this examination of evidence, satisfactory as it is in the result, is very far from being that easy and off-hand way of "proving the truth of the Scriptures" which untaught people vaguely imagine to be possible and even necessary. A similar series of remarks might be made on the verification of the Sacraments of the Church, as being the same as those originally instituted by our LORD, and ever practised by His people. But, passing now to our immediate subject, it will not be difficult to see that the Apostolicity of the Ministry, if fairly examined with equal patience, admits of the SAME kind of proof, as either the SACRAMENTS or the SCRIPTURES of the Church. Indeed there scarcely seems a possibility of any traditive truth being supported by stronger evidence than we have for the fact of the Succession ; so that if this be not true, it appears impossible to say what proof we could ever have to substantiate any such fact.

So far back indeed as any genuine general records of past events exist, we may boast that our Apostolical records exist. So that during these latter, which may be called the literary ages of the world, we may trace the existing record of the Succession in our principal dioceses for many centuries. But this is not the kind of evidence which we could speak of, as so abundantly satisfactory ; nor could we esteem it so, even if it reached to the Apostles' days, and were cleared of all those doubts of its genuineness, which we before alluded to. (page 47.) It would not be satisfactory, for this simple, though little thought of reason, namely, That a Succession of Bishops in one See, is not and cannot ordinarily be, a succession of one and the same Apostolical line. So that if, for example, we should produce a list of every Archbishop of Canterbury to the very first, who was consecrated by a French Bishop, and should then add the name of every one that had preceded that French Bishop in his see, up to the Apostles' days, still we should not have proved the existence of any One line of Apostolical descent. No single line of Succession confined to a single Church is possible. Every newly ordained Bishop in every See comes of a new line ; and that a threefold line, as we shall presently notice. In addition to which, it should be borne in mind, that the Succession was

transmitted in many lines, even from the beginning. Endeavour to examine these points more in detail.

We learn from Eusebius, that the Apostles selected various parts of the world as the separate fields of their labour. And wherever there was an Apostle, there was one who had the power (which he did not neglect to use) of transmitting the grace of the Ministry of CHRIST; consequently there must have been several lines of Ministerial Succession from the first. Probably every Apostle ordained some, as "overseers," "presidents," of Churches; and so became an originator, not of one, but of several, lines of Apostolical grace. If each of the Twelve had ordained but one, there would still have been twelve such lines Apostolical: but since the indefatigable Apostles doubtless did much more than this, there must have been many Ministerial lines, from the very first. We are putting ourselves therefore in a very false position when, in arguing with Romanists, we allow them tacitly to assume, as they seem to do, that there was but one line of Apostolic Ministration transmitted from the beginning. But this error will be more apparent by examining farther.

Let us endeavour to look at the case both

historically and practically, that so we may see not only its past, but also its present bearings. In so doing we may be led to understand its principle more clearly. When, at any time, a Bishopric might become vacant in the Church, and a new Bishop was to be consecrated thereto by the "laying on of hands," by whom was this solemn rite to be performed? Take, for example, a Bishop of Antioch. He dies, and a new one is to be consecrated.—Who is to do it?—Several, probably, unite in "laying hands on him" with prayer and fasting. (Acts xiii. 3.) Suppose one of them to be the Bishop of Alexandria; then the next question must be—Who consecrated *him*? and those who were his coadjutors at Antioch? And it might take us to as many different Churches to decide this point, as there were Bishops at that consecration. By the laws and practice of the Church¹, it is necessary for three Bishops, if possible, to be present and unite in the Consecration of every new Bishop. Now suppose another of the three, in the case just given, to have been a Bishop of Rome; then to trace the Apostolical Succession we must proceed to ask, who conse-

¹ Originating probably from a *literal* interpretation of Matt. xviii. 20. Just as the bowing at The Blessed Name seems derived, by Catholic and pious practice taking *literally* Philippians ii. 10.

crated that Bishop of Rome?—Not the previous Bishop of Rome; for he, probably and almost invariably, would be dead before his Successor was appointed. Then, of course it must needs be some foreign Bishop, assisted by *two* others from different parts of Christendom. And then the question would widen still farther, as each of *their* ordinations would have to be examined. And so the inquiry would have to proceed, widening from Bishop to Bishop, and from Church to Church, till we might arrive, if possible, at the first Apostolic consecration of at least *one* of the long line, through which the manifold grace had flowed. Except in the case of the translation of a Bishop from one See to another (a practice unsanctioned by primitive antiquity) it would never happen that the *same* line of Succession would be at all continued in any one Church, even during two succeeding Episcopates. And, even in that case, it would be mingled with the Succession of the two other Bishops, who had joined in the new consecration. Hence a Succession of Bishops in any one Church is *not* a Succession of the same spiritual line of descent. Nay, if we had no more to allege than the line of the Bishops of a particular Church, even though we could enumerate them quite up to the Apostles, we should not have proved

a valid Succession. But rather the reverse; because it must have been very possible that some one, or more, of the line might have died suddenly, before the ordaining of the Successor; in which case the Succession would be lost, unless some *other* Church were applied to. It is plain that no particular Church, whether in Constantinople, Canterbury, or Rome, can pretend to possess an exclusive line of Apostolic grace. It is plain that no Church can be strictly said to "derive its orders" from another. And it only evinces a want of thinking, for any man to say, for example, "that such and such a Church derives its orders from the Church of Rome." Every one must have observed the false position in which English Churchmen have allowed themselves to be put, by overlooking this simple point. They have thus admitted, practically, that the Church of Rome had a private line of Apostolical Succession, of which she could impart to others!—forgetting that the Bishop of Rome himself is necessarily indebted to the Bishops of three other Churches for *his own* consecration¹. The Succession is and

¹ And our false position is frequently increased by our tacitly admitting the *popular* antithesis between ourselves and the continental Churches, which are taken *in a mass*—and called, all together, "The Church of Rome!"—Thus we practically overlook the *fact*, That the Church of Rome is one *particular* Italian Church: and so increase our own apparent difficulty.

must be CATHOLIC, coming through all the Bishops of the Holy Church throughout all the world. And in this lies our security. Just as our persuasion of the genuineness of the Scriptures arose, not from our seeing the originals, or the earliest copies, but from the united testimony and criticism of Christian men; so our conviction of the validity and necessity of the Succeeding Ministry results from a like Catholicity of testimony. Here too, as with the Scriptures, we have unquestioned phenomena, (the whole history of the Catholic world,) which can only be explained by admitting the *fact*. The Church of Rome has no more preserved our Orders, than she has our Bibles. And in this fact lies our chief security, that no particular Church, in Rome or elsewhere, has the Succession in its keeping, so as to be able either to keep it, or fatally corrupt it; for it is CATHOLIC.

And further: That very intricacy of the interwoven Catholic line, which renders it so impracticable a thing to trace the individual private Succession of any Bishop upwards to the Apostles, gives it an amassed mightiness, and hitherto uncalculated strength, when tracked downwards from the beginning. The twelve Apostles began it, by ordaining the first Bishops; and when in the very next generation the practice be-

came established, of three Bishops assisting at every fresh consecration, it was at once morally impossible to pervert, or intercept the grace Apostolical. In the very next generation any three Bishops who came to a fresh Ordination, would each bring a three-fold Succession, so as to convey the Grace which had flowed through nine different Churches. The difficulty of failure would thence be still further augmented in the next generation, and the next. And what would be even at so early a stage, a moral impossibility, would needs go on accumulating from age to age. So that if at any time by any possibility, the Church's vigilance was defeated, and one of the ordaining Bishops was of doubtful Apostolicity, there were two more united with him, and so preserving the grace of the institute¹. This was in accordance with the very first of the extant Apostolical Canons², which enacts, "Let a Bishop be ordained by two or by three Bishops" (and the larger number was almost invariably required). The strictness with which

¹ See Notes, No. II.

² Of the authenticity of the first fifty at least of the Apostolical Canons, there can now be no doubt. They consist of those rules which had grown up in the Church in the Apostles' days, and the first hundred years after them. They seem to have been composed very early indeed, but gathered together about a hundred years after the death of St. John, (probably, it is said, by Clement of Alexandria) and they are quoted as *ancient*, about a hundred years later.

this was kept up, is borne witness to alike by Fathers¹, and Councils, and Historians, from the very beginning. And if this were not unequivocally and universally the case, (as it certainly is, so as to make quotation and reference seem like affectation,) it would be easy to bring abundant and overbearing evidence of another kind. For the watchful care and pains of all the Churches in the matter of Ordinations is just as notorious, as that Christianity existed and prevailed in the world. The very faults of the early Christians, no less than their virtues, contributed to secure the Succession. Far indeed from lethargy were those times. Abounding heresies, mutual jealousy, and religious zeal, all combined to augment the Church's watchfulness. And, above all, the vigilantly sustained Discipline, by which the whole community was so interwoven, that the greatest and smallest affairs of Christian concern were alike communicated to the whole body. Not only would any new ordination be known in each of the three Churches from which the ordaining Bishops came; but it was very presently notified also to the Metropolitans² by Episcopal letters.

¹ See the Canons of Nice, and the earlier ones of Ancyra and Neocesarea, in Routh's edition of the Scriptor. Opus. and the Rel. Sacr. vol. iii., and Tertullian adv. Hær. c. 36.

² Such was the extent of discipline indeed, that even com-

And beyond this, the election of a Bishop was a matter well known, and publicly canvassed. It was not a thing which (like the Canon of Scripture) might have been for a time kept to themselves, by the learned. No, the common people knew perfectly of the transaction. An infraction of an Apostolic rule, even in a minor point, was clamorously echoed from Church to Church, so that it was rarely ventured on; much less would it be suffered in any important thing. Even evil men in their day were obliged to conform to the outward rules of the faithful; or they found an universal outcry against them. The State had then nothing to do with the matter; and the people (such was their temper and disposition) would have thought of owning a heathen for a Bishop, as soon as a man not duly ordained. Nay, there was even a holy emulation among the Churches; in consideration of which we might in a qualified sense, admit an additional kind of sacredness and certainty, so to speak, in the Succession of those Episcopates, which were noted for peculiar carefulness; as in the Ante-Nicene times that of Alexandria appears to have been.

So was it from the first.—And in every submon Christians in passing temporarily to another Church, had to take letters of communion from their Bishop.

sequent generation of Christians, as we thus see, the intricacy of the Succession, and consequently the difficulty of breaking it, would be more and more intensely augmented ; as if indeed utterly defying the unfaithfulness or fraud of man to set it aside. Whatever else has at any time been charged against the Catholic Church, it has never been said, that she failed in duly Ordaining her Bishops ; and even if this could be shown, still a failure in one part would not touch the rest¹. To break up the Succession of the Apostolic Ministry nothing less, indeed, seems to be required than a self-destroying conspiracy of the Church Universal.

We possess then all the Evidences of this illustrious fact, which human testimony can furnish, or human industry bring together. Universal witnesses to support it ; and not one against it.—Scriptures,—Canons,—Councils,—Fathers,—and Churches,—the learned and the common people—all evidencing one thing ; and even heretics and infidels not denying it as fact ;—a fact too, which they are forced to see has gathered and still shall gather fresh mightiness, as centuries roll on² ! For on the heads of the present

¹ See Notes, No. II.

² “ Per Successiones Episcoporum pervenientem (h. e.

Bishops of the Church Universal, there rests the concentrated grace of all the Apostles. And this One Institute—the MINISTRY of CHRIST now stands¹, as at first Divinely set up, an abiding monument of the truth, that HE who determined by the “weakness” and “foolishness” of preaching to save them that believe, has manifested that the “foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men.”—The things which man in all his wisdom contrived, eighteen hundred years ago, are departed like shadows. What GOD ordained remains, and shall “till the consummation of the world.”

Would that the thought of this stupendous

Ecclesiam) usque ad nos, judicantes confundimus omnes eos qui quoquo modo præter quam oportet colligunt.”—S. Irenæus, in lib. iii. adversus Hæreses, c. 3. In which may be seen the Evidence of the teaching of Polycarp, St. John’s disciple.

¹ “Quis enim *fidelis* servus et prudens quem constituit Dominus ejus super domum suam ut det cibos in tempore?”—Quod ad *Apostolos ceterosque Episcopos et Doctores* parabola ista pertineat manifestum est: maxime ex eo quod apud Lucam (cap. xii.) Petrus interrogat dicens, “Ad nos parabolam istam dicis? an ad omnes?”—... Ait Apostolus, (ad Cor. c. iv.) “Ita nos existimet homo, ut ministros Christi et Dispensatores Mysteriorum.”—Hic jam quæritur inter dispensatores ut *fidelis* quis inveniatur, &c.—Origen. in Matth. Tractat. xxxi.

grace might ever dwell with each Bishop of the Church Universal, that those words of promise which are the charter of the perpetuity, and the power which Christ hath given might accompany them, as if ever and anon spoken by a heavenly voice,—to elevate, console, and awe their inmost spirit,—“LO, I AM WITH YOU!”—Nay, what thoughts of glory and majesty may well possess us all ! when, putting aside the thankless debates, and presumptuous questionings of men, there rises before our mind’s eye the august vision of the “whole family in heaven and earth;” existing as for ever ONE to The Omniscient EYE, yet mysteriously passing through the long and varying successions of time, age after age ; ministered unto throughout, by ONE succeeding Priesthood¹, ever subsisting “after the power of an endless life,” and so holding together all the members of the eternal family, the living and the dead, in mystic fellowship and communion, even reaching to a “fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ !” Seems it not too great a thought for mind of man to take in, in all its sublime fulness?—And has it not some holy influence, forcing from us the exclamation of felt unworthiness—‘Alas ! for what we *are*,—and what we *should* be?’—It is

¹ See the next Lecture, towards the close.

as if (with earth's pollutions yet unwashed from our spirits) we were borne upwards in vision even "to heaven-gate," and bidden by the Angel of an Apocalypse to look in, and see, though from far, the eternal wonders, behold the forms of distant glory, and feel, though but for a moment, the thrilling air of heaven's own Holiness.

III.

THE OBJECTIONS.

FROM THE EPISTLE ¹.—"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one towards another, according to CHRIST JESUS. That ye may with One mind and One mouth glorify God."—Rom. xv. 5.

OUR object in the present Lecture will, I trust, be the same as that of the Apostle's prayer in these words.....

To confirm the truth of a doctrine, it cannot be supposed necessary to answer all objections and difficulties which ingenuity might raise, for in that case, perhaps, no doctrine would ever be established at all. But when any particular truth has been reasonably set forth and defended, it is a kind of farther recommendation of it with the many to

¹ The second week in Advent.

show, that it is not in reality surrounded by such serious difficulties as might, at first sight, be supposed. Of course it is not right in any man to suspend his belief of a proved truth, simply because it seems to be attended by some difficulties; still we must deal with human nature as we find it; and the majority do not appear to have that bold and honest mind which will maintain right principles in defiance of all obstacles. Neither have they that lofty faith in God which will trust Him in the face of seeming improbabilities. Therefore, surely, it is a Christian thing to endeavour, now as far as we are able, to remove such difficulties as obstruct the faith of some, concerning the Ministry of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church: only premising that our object here is not to prove the truth, but to facilitate its reception. The truth of the APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION, being confirmed by foregone proof, cannot, however, be affected by the measure of our success in clearing up difficulties.

It would be a very vain waste of time to attempt to answer many light and frivolous objections; for so far as they are really stumbling blocks to any, they will soon be removed when the doctrine itself is at all understood. Necessarily there will seem to arise from time to time

numberless minor points which, however, any man whose judgment is worth convincing would soon be able to explain for himself. In such proportion as a man apprehends the truth, or, if I may so express it, perceives the spirit and scope of the Catholic Religion, he will come to see, at a glance, the answer which, on Catholic principles, would be given to such and such difficulties. This is the Divine reward of an abiding humble faith.

The common and most influential Objections may admit of a two-fold classification; according as they arise from certain supposed difficulties in the Fact, and in its consequences—or in the Doctrine, and its consequences. And we will at once proceed to consider, first, some difficulties thought to be historically and practically connected with the Fact of the Succession, and its consequences.

The Objection which requires, perhaps, the least trouble and information to make, (and from its indistinctness is rather difficult to grapple with,) and which, therefore, is more frequently employed than any other, is founded on a charge of general and fatal Corruption of Christianity in the middle ages. Granting, it is said, the fact, that there was an unbroken Succession of Bishops in the Church Catholic from the beginning, still the gross

and palpable corruption which so extensively pervaded the Church for ages, was quite sufficient to rob the Succession of all spiritual value. Now this wide and gratuitous assertion might fairly be met by asking the objector—how he comes to know this?—How he comes to be so sure that personal human corruption would wholly obstruct the super-human grace of a Divine institution? How he arrives at such a certainty that the grace of God is not mightier than the sin of man? How he *can* be so sure that “where sin abounded,” grace did not “much more abound?” At the best, his objection rests on an unproved assumption in principle—an assumption too, directly at variance with our experience of God’s past dealings with man; as the history of the Jewish people bears witness. It would be difficult, as we remarked in our last Lecture, to find any parallel in the history of the Christian Church to the godless impieties of the Jewish, during four hundred years previous to CHRIST’s coming, and yet the anointing oil of the Priesthood was not inefficacious, nor even the Prophetical gifts withdrawn, up to the time of the Advent. Even CHRIST’s persecutor Caiaphas “*prophesied*, being High Priest that year.” It is, therefore, quite unsatisfactory, at the least, to take for granted in this way, that general Corruption would have totally destroyed the grace of Apos-

tolie Succession. The utmost that can, with any show of fairness, be pretended is, that it *might* have done so : and even this ought surely to be proved and not barely assumed as it here is. And even supposing that this were proved, then there would be one thing more to be shown, namely, that the amount of corruption in the Church had really, in point of fact, reached that height, which would overwhelm the grace of Her instituted Ministry. And how this could be certainly proved, even if true, it seems hard to say. In the nature of things, it would ever remain a point uncertain to man, and known to GOD alone. Our objectors, therefore, must assume this point too. And without, perhaps, being much justified in their assumption by the facts of history. For while a lofty moral sense is recognized among men, and so long as humility and self-devotion to GOD, and disinterested, even though untaught, zeal, are reckoned Christian virtues,—so long, in spite of party misrepresentations, will the great body of our Christian forefathers, lay and clerical, in the middle ages bear honourable comparison with us their overweening children. There is more of the spirit of pride than the spirit of CHRIST—more of party vanity than of Catholic generosity—more of historical ignorance than of philosophical wisdom, in these self-congratulatory comparisons between our

meagre conflicting, though (if you will) enlightened, “systems” of Religion and the One high-minded faith, and chivalrous piety, and unsystematized benevolence of our less instructed ancestors. —At all events, the vague objections drawn from these intangible charges of general corruption, very plainly rest on two unproved assumptions—one of the principle and one of the fact. And this, perhaps, is all that is necessary to be shown. For is not the Succession itself a fact of sufficient magnitude to make us pause before we say, it is WORTH NOTHING? This undeniable fact which we allege; this Succession of CHRIST’S Apostolic Ministry; this, GOD’S sustained marvel of eighteen hundred years, is assailed by man’s bare assertion, ‘that it has been SUSTAINED FOR NOTHING.’

But from among these general charges of Corruption, there sometimes is one singled out, as of a magnitude too great to be doubtful, and to the believer in Revelation too malignant to be of questionable effect: the charge, I mean, of Idolatry. If there were nothing else, it is said, to impede the spiritual grace of the Succession, the Idolatry prevalent in the Churches of the Roman Communion would be amply sufficient. And in proof of this, the case of the Jewish Church is confidently quoted, and the fierce denunciations uttered and

executed against God's favoured people for this especial sin, beyond all others. Now here too we seem to have some unproved assumptions; as well as some false reasoning from the analogy of the Jewish people. First of all there is the assumption which we have previously noticed, namely, that there is an amount of personal human sin which *fatally* cuts off, or obstructs, the instituted channels of Divine grace; which has never yet been proved. Then there is the assumption that idolatry is the specific sin whose guilt would have this effect. And this may possibly be true—when the first assumption is made good—but as yet, this has not been proved. And then there is the third assumption, that the Church in the middle ages was so fully and universally guilty of this sin of idolatry, as to cut off the virtue of the Apostolic Succession for ever. And I need hardly say that this has not been proved, for it must in any case remain a doubtful point—beyond our power to settle for certain. And yet how unheedinglly these three assumptions are made use of in the arguments so resolutely and thanklessly urged from the parallel circumstances of the Jews. In the first place it is assumed that the grace of the Jewish institutions was so cut off as to be *lost* on account of idolatry, in the times before CHRIST; which cannot be shown. (Rom. xi. 29.)

For even if it be shown that that Divine grace was quite suspended during a season of idolatry, it would still be certain, that when the Idolatry was repented of and forsaken, the grace reflowed through the accustomed channels of the Mosaic Institutes. And in spite of all past idolatries, it had not been wholly cut off even at the time of the Coming of CHRIST. In the next place there is a false assumption concerning the sin of idolatry itself; which seems to have been so severely visited as it was, because it was the specifically forbidden sin, the protesting against which was one great special object of the national existence of the Jews amidst a godless world. It was not, surely, that GOD abhorred idol worship more than murder, or uncleanness, or injustice; but it was, that "in Judah was GOD to be known"—the one GOD—the forgotten GOD—amidst Gentile polytheism, until the Coming of The Great Mediator. Every Divine interference with that nation seemed to bear this as its reason, "That all the earth may know that there is a GOD in Israel."—"The LORD, He is the GOD! The LORD He is the GOD!" (Joshua iv. 24; 1 Kings viii. 42, 43; Psalm lx. throughout, &c.) Idolatry in that nation had a heinousness beyond all other sin. And great as the guilt of idolatry must ever be, yet it can hardly be called in the *same* sense, the specific design of

the existence of the Christian Church, to protest against that sin beyond all others. And until this can be made good, the strict parallel cannot be established. In the third place, there is a further assumption of an actual analogy of sinfulness in this particular, between the Jewish and Christian Churches, which is not borne out by facts. Jewish idolatry implied a voluntary and intentional abandonment of the worship of JEHOVAH. Now this can in no wise be affirmed of the worst idolatry of the Romish Hierarchy. No one will say that the Churches in communion with Rome, ever intended to abandon the worship of God, for the sake of Angels and Saints. It may be safely and truly said, that their reverence paid to images, and their invocations of saints and angels, are of an idolatrous nature, and calculated to lead, and have led, to idolatry in the common people ; but it would be unreasonable and untrue to say, that the sin of the Church of Rome in this matter was the *same* sin as that of the Jews when they deliberately abandoned the worship of God. And, therefore, we cannot argue from the one to the other.

If we thus look into this objection fairly, we must see how very little it amounts to. It depends throughout on unproved assumptions. And so far

as we may take the analogy in the case of the Jewish Church, it tells directly against the objection. For there cannot be shown more, at most, than a suspension of the grace of the Mosaic Institutes. And if even Jewish idolatry, when repented of, was no impediment to the reflux of the Divine blessing, so it might be in the Christian Church, even if it could be proved universally guilty of the very sin of the Jews—which it cannot be. In different ages, and at different places, some Churches, in communion with Rome, have paid a highly sinful honour to Saints and their images. The amount of such honour has varied greatly in degree, being more or less sinful, at different times and places; yet at the worst, it was never universal, in any essentially idolatrous degree. And even if it had been, there would only (if the analogy were ever so strictly borne out) be a suspension of still latent Apostolic grace, which any branches of the Church might, on repentance, again enjoy. Far be it from us indeed to palliate the sin, or the danger, of the idolatrous practices of the present Church of Rome, but let a legitimate and not a superficial estimate thereof be made. Instead of being misled by words, let us look to principles. We are bound to protest against all which draws off the heart from the true GOD and only SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST; and therefore against Idolatry in

all its forms. The Churches throughout the world, in communion with that of Rome, have conformed to the practices of the ungodly world in one way ; but so have we in another. And as the heathenish conformities and superstitions of Romanists are condemned by St. Paul, when he forbids Christians even to “eat of things offered to idols;” so the infidel coldness and individual selfishness of many Protestants are equally condemned, when we are bidden to flee from covetousness, “which is idolatry.” Whether, with some, we make idols of a particular Church and the Saints,—or with others, make idols of Private Judgment and Mammon, we are alike guilty. Let there be no rude, impatient haste in judging of any Christians. So long as GOD bears with us, we may well bear with one another. Idolatry, worse than the Romish, was sanctioned by some of the Churches of Asia. But still they were addressed as “Churches.” That very sanction of actual heathen idolatry, which the Churches had been warned against, they were guilty of allowing. Of both Pergamos and Thyatira it is said in sharp rebuke, that they permitted some among them “to eat of things offered to idols,” which almost amounted to an admission of those heathen gods. And yet, as CHURCHES still, they are warned to “repent and do the FIRST works,” lest GOD should be provoked

to "remove their candlestick out of his place." So it was not removed as yet.—While the Church Catholic endures perpetually, God cuts off from time to time its irrecoverably corrupt branches. But it is for God, not us, to do it. And with this, let us dismiss the Objection concerning Idolatry.

One further Objection which we shall notice, as connected with the Fact of the Succession, is that which is urged, though in very different senses, against our own Church in particular, by Romanists on the one hand, and Sectarians on the other; both anxious to deny us the possession of that grace of Apostolical Ministry, which the former desire to monopolize, and the latter to set at nought altogether. 'If (say they with somewhat of *ambiguity* of expression) the Succession is in the Church CATHOLIC, they who are in a state of Schism, cannot be considered to possess it.' Now if we were to admit this position exactly as they state it, they would then have to prove us Schismatics, with respect to the CHURCH CATHOLIC, before they could, on this ground, invalidate our Succession. But, in truth, the objection ought to be a little more carefully looked into. The sin of Schism admits of various degrees. Of course, if it be clearly made out that any part of the Church is (not partly torn only, but) totally severed

from the Body Catholic, it follows, that that part has not that Sacramental grace which the Church alone possesses. But it is certain that in its fullest sense, even Romanists, acknowledging, as they do, Lay-baptism, could not thus cut off as *totally* Schismatic, all who are not of their communion;—all the Churches of the East, and of the farthest West—The American, the Scotch, and our own. And the Sectarians cannot, for very shame, deny us a place in the Universal Church. That very liberality which they need for their own sakes will afford us some shelter too. And as to the special charge of heinous Schism urged against us in the particular matter of our Reformation; if we admit it, as fully, as any party can afford to urge it, it could not go the length of invalidating our Orders Apostolical. The Church Catholic anathematized us not; but only the Bishop of Rome, who had not any right or power so to do¹, but was himself Schismatical and Anti-christian in attempting it; as St. Irenæus might have taught him. The Church Catholic we would have been content to be judged by². We appealed to a General Council, and after wearisome denial and delay, and artifice, they offered us the mockery of Trent. About a hundred and fifty years after

¹ See the Nicene Canons.

² See Jewel's Apology.

our Reformation, we were recognized as a Church by the Greek Church¹: though the attempt to unite us with them in one Communion unhappily failed. At the time of our Reformation, notwithstanding much temptation, much carelessness, and much sin, our Apostolical Succession seemed marvellously guarded, as by a heavenly hand. The documents are as plain, the facts as sure, as history, invidiously sifted, can make them; so that the candid Romanist and the learned Jesuit cannot deny them. Let any one examine it for himself. Any man, who will deal fairly with facts, will be obliged to own that there have been greater confusions and Schisms² in the see of Rome itself, than in the see of Canterbury.—But they who go the length of affirming a cessation of Apostolic grace in any particular Church or branch of a Church on the ground of total Schism, from the whole body of CHRIST, must excuse us if we ask them for proof of their assertion; and tell them, that until it is proved, we must treat it as a pure (though a very convenient) assumption.

¹ And again, virtually, by the Gallicans.

² This is worthy of their consideration who are apt to be too disheartened at the divisions in the English Church. When the Popedom was a disputed matter for seventy years, what could the plain Catholic laity have thought? It was impossible to avoid the anathema of one Pope or the other, both pretending to infallibility. See Notes No. III.

Those further historical and practical Objections which might be urged against the Apostolical Succession, either in the Church Universal, or in our own particular branch of it, would be such as attempt to throw some degree of doubt on the fact itself¹; and they have already been answered by anticipation in the last Lecture, in which we mainly dwelt on the EVIDENCE of the fact. To notice them here in any greater detail, would therefore be only to repeat needlessly what has been already said. But closely connected with the Objections thus briefly considered to the facts of the Succession, there are generally supposed to be certain fatal CONSEQUENCES, which it may be well just to glance at. "Popery," and its fearful train of practical evils, an infringement of liberty of conscience, and spiritual slavery, are apprehended as the sure result, if the Apostolical line be admitted to be preserved. But is it thus? Are any of us anxious for a "liberty" which is confessedly synonymous with a freedom from obedience to God's own laws and appointments? Or can we not admit the right of any man to "liberty of conscience," without insisting that such a liberty will suffice to guide him into all truth? Doubtless

¹ Such, for instance, as those glanced at in p. 47, 48, and referred to in Notes No. II. and III.

every man has a right to move on unshackled towards the "heavenly city," but shall he therefore dispense with the only effectual guide? Granting him the fullest "freedom," may he not yet miss his way?—Whoever will take the pains to think of it, will see that this Apostolical doctrine of the Succession, is no other kind of restraint upon liberty of conscience, than any other Apostolical doctrine. It may certainly be said that if a man be not blessed with the blessings of the Church Apostolical, he is in a perilous condition; but it is difficult to see how this affects liberty of conscience, any more than the assertion, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." So that such an Objection is only that of the infidel, in a slightly modified shape, when he complains of the "hardship of not providing for the case of the conscientious unbeliever."

And as to the fear of Popery; that seems a still more strange Objection. Surely the very reverse is the more correct reasoning. If it be a fact capable of proof, and which was believed by all Christians for 1500 years, That there was a true Succession of Ministers from the Apostles—are we not taking the very surest ground against Romanists, when we show, that we possess just such a descended

Ministry, in no degree dependent on communion with *their* Church, or any other single Church? If we could *not* show such a Ministry, then the man, who from examination found out the truth of the necessity of an Apostolic Church, might be obliged indeed to resort to the communion of Rome. So that by asserting our true Apostolical claims, we are so far from giving place to Rome, that we are striking the only effectual blow at her supremacy—we are so far from forcing a man to join the Papacy, that we are offering him his only refuge from its spiritual tyranny. And as to all such half-infidel objections as, ‘that there would be nothing to check the onward advance of corruption and error,’ and the like, if it were thus taken to be unlawful to sin against, or set aside, the Apostolical Succession, in any case; it would be quite enough to reply, that we ought to be content to trust God for the success of His own appointed institutions. But there are facts, sufficiently strong to enable us to speak much more explicitly on this head. Among those who threw off the Roman yoke in the sixteenth century, we see, that the Non-episcopal communities of the Continent have gone down into worse than Roman Corruption, “even denying THE LORD that bought them;” from which depth of doctrinal corruption our Episcopal Church has been graciously pre-

served. Not, indeed, that it is right to depend too much on this kind of evidence, popular as it may be. It is better for the Christian to exercise a habit of unenquiring confidence in his Heavenly Father, trusting Him for the "consequences" of His Own appointments, disregarding the sophistries, and fears, and oppositions of the world.

Passing, now, from this class of Practical Objections, let us consider some of those which are supposed to lie against the DOCTRINE of the Succession. They are, indeed, so peculiarly unchristian, so faithless in their principles, and so indefinite in their shape, that it will not be so easy a task to deal with them; but we must briefly attempt it.

One of the commonest and most comprehensive of these objections, is that which is advanced against the whole Doctrine of an Authoritative Ministry in the Church, though more especially against the notion of a Descended Priesthood; viz. That it is a going back to "beggarly elements," a perpetuation of Judaism in the Church. They who urge this, do not scruple to deny all similarity of office between the Christian and the Jewish Priesthood, and they represent it as essentially Anti-christian in any man in these days

to pretend to the Priestly office. "If," say they, "it be even granted that a separate order of Ministers is sanctioned by the Gospel, still it is both arrogant and unscriptural to pretend to institute any sort of parallel between the Christian and the Jewish Ministries." It is strange that any man can speak so thoughtlessly, who has had the advantage of reading even an English Testament. Not only is the principle of the necessity of a proper Ministry assumed throughout the Christian Scriptures, but the very analogy which is now denied between the Christian and the Jewish ministries is *throughout* assumed, and sometimes expressly insisted on, and drawn out. If it were so dangerous and Anti-Christian an error to pretend to a Priesthood in the Church, at all resembling that of the Temple, surely the Apostles would have been especially anxious to avoid using any expressions which should seem to imply any such thing. St. Paul's language, if not to be taken simply as he employed it—that is, if it were not literally *true*—was calculated much to mislead. It could not have been safe, when the early Church had so strong a tendency to Judaize, to make use of what may be called "priestly terms" and allusions. And yet this is done continually in the New Testament, and even as a "matter of course." Observe, for instance, that sentence of St. Paul,

specially concerning the ancient Priesthood, but so widely expressed as to convey a general principle, assumed as known to be equally true now as of old—"No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of GOD as was Aaron." (Heb. v. 1, 4). So the Holy Baptist at the beginning of the Gospel puts forth this as an Evangelical principle, concerning any Divine Ministry, not excepting Christ's Own; "A man can *take unto himself* nothing" [margin]. (John iii. 27, &c.) St. Paul likewise calls CHRIST Himself "the Apostle and High-priest," linking the two ideas together—joining the Apostolical and the Priestly offices—but saying that even HE "glorified not Himself to be made an High-priest¹." The FATHER "sent" Him; and "as His FATHER sent HIM, so He sent His Apostles." And what, again, might we not fairly conclude from such an allusion as the following, even if there were nothing more clear? "We have an *altar* whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle;" (Heb. xiii. 10.) which occurs immediately after the injunction concerning the Ministry, "remember THEM" (v. 7). And in the verses immediately following, we find a similar injunction, and similar sacrificial allusions; (v. 11, 15—17.) Must we not think that the

¹ Connected with this part of the subject few books are so important to be read as "Johnson's Unbloody Sacrifice."

Apostle recognized *some* analogy between the Jewish and the Christian Ministries¹? But we have, in addition to such manifold allusions, some passages much more direct and indisputable. In writing to the Corinthians, St. Paul places the Eucharistic Table of the LORD in a position precisely parallel with that of the Jewish Altar, and founds his whole argument on it; (1 Cor. x. 13, &c.) and places together on the same footing the Ministries of the Temple and of the Church. (ch. ix. 13.) His argument for the right of the Christian Minister to a temporal maintenance is wholly derived from the analogy of the Jewish Priesthood; this would, then, be no argument, if there were no analogy. His words are, "Do ye not know that they which Minister about holy things, live of the things of the altar? *even so hath* THE LORD *ordained*, that they that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." Evidently the former Ministry is assumed to be the pattern of the *latter*. But in another place, it is still more fully carried out. The Apostle shows the Corinthians, that the analogy between the two Ministries was such as to raise the Christian Ministry immeasurably superior to the Jewish, both in privilege and power. What Jewish Priest could ever use

¹ See also, among others, that striking passage, Rom. xv. 15.

such exalted language as St. Paul had employed concerning the punishment of sin? (1 Cor. v. 5.) or its pardon? (2 Cor. ii. 10, 11. 15.) And so he declared his Ministry to be much superior to that of Moses himself. (2 Cor. iii. 7.) “If the Ministration of condemnation (the Jewish Ministry) be glory, how much more doth the Ministration of righteousness (the Christian) *exceed* in glory? For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of that *which excelleth*; for if that which was done away was glorious, *much more* that which remaineth is glorious.” Moses, he further shows, had a “veiled,” we an “unveiled” Ministry. “We all with unveiled face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord.” (v. 18.) “We preach not *ourselves*,” indeed, he adds, “but CHRIST JESUS the LORD, AND Ourselves your servants for JESUS’ sake; *for* GOD . . . hath shined in OUR hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of His glory.” (ch. iv. 6; see also ch. v. 19, 20.)—The promises of abiding grace, “enduring” mercy, and perpetual blessing to the ancient Israel, are commonly enough thought to await fulfilment in the Church: so also, shall not the ancient promises of an everlasting Priesthood, which were not fulfilled to the Jews, be amply fulfilled in the CHURCH?—The ONE Priesthood of CHRIST “continueth ever” manifested in HIS

Church according to His will ; “ not after the law of a carnal commandment, *but* (ἀπαρβατον) *after the power of an endless life.*”

Perhaps it may be thought needless to dwell longer on this objection to the doctrine of the proper Ministry of the Church. The other objections, however, which are commonly urged, are of so similar a character as to be partly answered already, by what has been said. It may be useful, nevertheless, to bestow a few more remarks on them. Some who scarcely like to object to the Doctrine of the Ministry in open terms, are given to speak of the “SUCCESSION” as a “carnal” doctrine, though without clearly showing us any other doctrine to supply its place. It would be well for those who lightly adopt such language, if they would weigh its *meaning*, before they make such use of it. If by calling the Succession a “carnal” doctrine, they mean that the doctrine is very different from, and perhaps inconsistent with all that *they* take to be “spiritual,” there is nothing very fearful in the charge. Only it is scarcely consistent with Christian humility to adopt from Scripture a term of opprobrium, in order to make of it a private use of our own. Such objectors may be reminded that there were some in the Church of Corinth, who took themselves to be “spiritual” enough to dispute the

APOSTLE's directions in some Church matters. And St. Paul replied simply by asserting his Ministerial authority, however "carnal" that might be thought. His words are, "If any think himself to be a prophet, or *spiritual*, let him acknowledge that the things that I write are the commandments of the LORD." (1 Cor. xiv. 37.) At all events the charge of "carnality" ought to be a little explained, that we may know what meaning to affix to it. In what sense, for instance, the "Doctrine of laying on of hands," can be called carnal, and not also the doctrine of "Baptism by water?"

But there are those who somewhat modify this objection, and say, that our doctrine is too "technical" to be worthy of a Divine Revelation. That is to say, it is unworthy of the spirituality and dignity of CHRIST's religion to be thus necessarily allied to outward and sensible forms. But surely this is as pure an *assumption*, as all the *other* objections which have been considered. At least, it remains to be *proved*; and so far as the analogy of GOD's previous dealing with mankind may guide us, we should be inclined perhaps to a very different conclusion. What, for instance, could be more "technical" than the Scriptural account of the sin of Adam? The moral aspect of the offence is *not* dwelt on; it is simply

presented to us as a disobedience of a set injunction, a failure in formal allegiance.—What, again, could be more “technical” than the acceptable sacrifice of Abel?—Or the trial of Abraham’s faith?—And might we not point in a similar way to the whole system established by God among the Jews?—Or let the more Spiritual institute of “Prophecy” be considered. There was much in it that would now be thought very “technical.” The prophet Balaam¹, though an unholy man, had power to “bless and curse;” there was a potency in his word. And then we read of the “schools of the prophets.” And the Spirit of Prophecy seemed poured out in so technical and systematic a way, that there were certain places, and hours, and modes², in which the Spirit was in active energy, in such wise that strangers who came near were affected by it. So we read, that king Saul and his messengers, when they came to the company of prophets at Ramah, all began likewise to prophesy; (1 Sam. xix. 23.) just as Saul himself had done on another occasion, previous to his anointing (ch. x. 10). Or, to come to a later period, how “technical” does the Ministry of the Baptist appear throughout! And yet our Lord submitted to his “technical” Baptism, saying,

¹ See Notes No. I.

² 1 Kings xxii. 24.

“*Thus* it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” And surely we might make the same kind of remarks on the whole life of our LORD Himself. Look at the formal Genealogies at the beginning.—Is it not a strangely “technical” appointment, that a grace so divine as that which redeemed mankind must needs flow through the line of David? And be recorded so scrupulously, as though each link of the chain were important?—And in all that CHRIST did, is there not much that might by some be called “technicality?” His conformity to the Jewish ritual: His temptation, His replies to the Jews, His difficulties, questions, and dark sayings, and many of His miracles, might surely by many be so esteemed¹. And then again, His Church and Sacraments: and His injunctions to the Apostles; as that, to “begin at Jerusalem” in their preaching, which they technically obeyed to the letter. (Acts xiii. 46.) But enough is plain, surely, from all this to show us that the technical nature of an institution *may* be no objection whatever to the Divine sanction of it. At all events, the contrary is an assumption requiring proof. Nay, further; if it be true, that man’s sight cannot at present endure the light of unveiled truth, then it may be that some sort of technical expres-

¹ As, for instance, the cure of the blind man, by the clay. Or that of the lepers.

sion of truth might even be expected in a Divine revelation. GOD manifests Himself "in part," and "in part" He shrouds Himself from us still.

But after all that has been said, there will be some who will rejoin : If this doctrine were of so great an importance, why is there not some much plainer statement about it in Scripture—something, that is, which might put it beyond doubt ? It might be worth considering in reply to this, whether such a question does not arise from a complete misapprehension of the nature and design of the Inspired Volume ? But, in any case, it is evident that the Socinian, or even the Infidel might easily ask the very same thing. The Scripture testimony to the doctrine of the TRINITY, plain as we think it, is evidently not *so* plain as to prevent doubts and differences of opinion. Can that be a valid objection against the doctrine of the Succession, which is none whatever against the TRINITY ? The Arians of the fourth age would gladly have accepted of any thing in "Scripture-terms," and pleaded hard for leaving the truth of the TRINITY in a (so called) "Scriptural" vagueness of expression. But the Catholic Church determined otherwise. And Her interpretation of those Scriptures which contain the Apostolical Succession, is quite as uniform and unequivocal as

of those which contain the truth of the HOLY TRINITY.

Here, while leaving this class of objections also, (raised, like the former, on pure assumptions) we must not omit to remind any who are trying by the aid of such objections to rid themselves of the Catholic truth, that there is, at best, a fearful uncertainty in the course which they are so pursuing—an uncertainty which seems not to have one solid advantage of any kind to recommend it.—But now before terminating our remarks on the manifold objections of men to this truth of God, it is important perhaps to make reference to some of the supposed, and the real Consequences of admitting this Apostolical Doctrine. In speaking of these, perhaps, our opponents manifest less knowledge and more unfairness, than with respect to any other of the topics in debate. The utmost pains are often taken to make out, on the ground of our “exclusiveness,” a case of bigotry, superstition, and intolerance. So that there is the more occasion to direct attention to these, which, imaginary as they are, form, nevertheless, the most cogent objections in the popular mind.

In the first place, whoever puts forth any statement concerning any subject, as the *truth*, neces-

sarily implies that a different statement would be false ; and therefore liable to all the consequences of the falsehood. Whatever is put forth as TRUTH, is necessarily *exclusive*. And is the Catholic doctrine more chargeable with “exclusiveness,” on this ground, than the doctrine of any party, or even individual?—When any man says that he thinks himself *right* in any matter, he virtually says that those who differ from him are *wrong*. And as to the future consequences of being wrong ; it will scarcely be denied, that the Sectarians are generally far more reckless in pronouncing judgments on that matter than *we*.

The popular shape in which this objection is most successfully brought forward is, That the doctrine of the Succession “unchurches” all the Protestant communities of Christendom, which are not Episcopal. This is exaggerated and represented as the very acme of intolerance, and equivalent to a judgment on our part that they must all necessarily perish everlastingly. It is melancholy to see the art with which this misrepresentation is brought forward to check any half-formed conviction of the truth, such as arises from a candid review of the unanswerable Evidence. It only shows us that there are some minds which it is hopeless to attempt to convince.

Let us, however, look at the objection rapidly, first, in an historical, and then in a theoretical light. Doubtless, if the Apostolic Succession be admitted, it follows that there can be no certainty of valid Sacraments apart from it. And those communities cannot be pronounced to be true Churches, which have no Succession. Now, upon this it is argued, that there is an inconsistency between us and our early Reformers: for, that *they* did not pronounce the Continental Protestants to be “unchurched,” which our principles oblige us to do; and that therefore we are more “Popish” and bigoted than they.—How far this is the real state of the case, they best can judge who are best acquainted with the writings of our Reformers. As to *their* principles, they are certainly not so doubtful as to be only arrived at by a silent deduction from their actions. Take, for instance, Archbishop Cranmer. His opinions, even in his later years, after he had well looked into the matter, and had passed through some change of sentiments, are left on record in his Sermons¹. In speaking of the necessary and exclusive Succession of the Ministry, he goes to the utmost extent of the Catholic Doctrine. But it may be said, generally, that the necessity of Apostolic Ordination

¹ Sermons on Baptism, Absolution, and the Eucharist.

was not a debated point at the Reformation. And those, abroad, who eventually departed from the Succession, did it with so much reluctance, and with such ample admission of their regret¹, that it could only be regarded as a temporary affliction of the Church. When Rome was exerting all her strength against the Reformed, it surely would have been deemed an uncalled for severity, had the English Church been forward to condemn the Continental brethren; especially as they did not defend the *principle* of separation from the Episcopacy; but just the reverse. It was surely enough that our Reformers asserted their own principles, (as they plainly did²) without proceeding formally to condemn their "less happy"³ brethren abroad. Add to all which, the fact, that that generation of Protestants had, all of them, been baptized in the Catholic Church; and most of their Ministers *had* received Episcopal Ordination; so that even the next generation might receive valid Baptism. It would be natural of course to pronounce a very careful judgment, if any, concerning such persons. It might have been difficult to say that such communities, however imperfect, were

¹ Bp. Hall's *Episcopacy by Divine Right*, p. 6.

² See Jewel, and Hooker. Ed. Keble. And Notes, No. IV.

³ "Non sumus *adeo felices*." Words of the President of the Synod of Dort.

“not Churches.” This might have fully accounted for the reserve of our Reformers, even had it been greater than it was ; more especially as the restoration of the lost Succession might not only have been hoped for, but, at one time, even expected ¹. But every one must surely perceive the difference of *our* position from that of our Reformers. We assert precisely the same principles, and in their *own* language. But *we* have to act towards men who on principle *reject* the Succession ; who are not *for certain* possessed of any Catholically Ordained Teachers, or so surely Baptized people : and who are perpetuating this awfully *doubtful* and Schismatical state of things. If in our circumstances we were to imitate what is thought the reserve of our Reformers, we might be fairly suspected as not holding their *principles*.

But the theoretical view of this objection is, perhaps, still more important to be considered. Let any man examine, what this charge of our unchurching so many other Protestants really amounts to, at the utmost. To what extent of “uncharitableness” does our theory oblige us?—And, first of all, how can we obviate the practical difficulty already alluded to, which is urged with

¹ Melanchthon Ep. Luthero, quoted by Bishop Hall.

so much confidence, that unordained ministers of many sects, have so large a measure of spiritual success?—It is remarkable that they who urge this, do not see how *variously* it is often applied to support the most opposite and jarring sentiments. And who can ever decide on the real value of any such appeals? We might admit, safely, that good has, at times, been done by unordained teachers, and yet, in that, admit nothing inconsistent with the exclusive Catholic claims of the Ordained Ministry. It has often been argued that even the Heathen Philosophy and the Mahometan Theism, were over-ruled as God's instruments of good, though evil in their nature: and the corruptest kind of Christianity may be well admitted to be much better than either of them¹. We cannot indeed allow the distorted estimate, which human vanity makes of its own good doings; but we will not question God's sovereignty over man's sin, from which He often brings good. We think it wrong not to "receive CHRIST" (Luke ix. 53.); and "follow the Apostles;" but we would not

¹ A parallel case, to a certain extent, may be seen in Judges xvii. 5, 6, 13. &c. The priesthood of the Lord was associated partly with idolatrous worship. Micah had graven images and teraphim, yet he, with a Levite for a Priest, was partly blessed by God. It is not for us to say how far God may bless those who are not strictly obeying Him; nevertheless we must not calculate on this. Obedience is still a duty.

“call down fire from heaven.” We think that it “shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment” than for a wilful rejecter, or non-receiver of the Apostles; but *we* judge not. They are in God’s hands. (Matt. x. 14.)—We have before said that we pronounce no private judgment on others.

And let it not be supposed that this is only a tacit way of avoiding a difficulty, to which our principles fairly conduct us. If they be honestly looked at, the Catholic principles have in them far more of real charity than any others. There is a large sense, in which every Baptized man is included in the Catholic Church, and may be, according to his measure, partaker of Her privileges; though he may not trace the grace to its true source, but may mistake the hand that blesses him¹. And the wideness of the Catholic principle, as to the bestowal of Baptismal grace, ought not to be lost sight of here. In the Church there seems to have been recognized a sort of threefold validity of Baptism. The first², as ordinarily re-

¹ That is; Many who have departed and joined the sects in sincerity and ignorance, may be attributing to human causes that re-invigoration of spiritual life, which is but the forgotten Baptismal grace of Christ, mercifully “*in them*, springing up to everlasting life.” (John iv. 14; John vii. 38, 39.) This may be also, one of God’s means of humbling and reforming His too careless Church.

² John iii. 5.—The ordinary “entrance to the Kingdom.”

ceived from a Minister of the Church ; the second ¹ pertaining to the grace of martyrdom, or “ Baptism by blood ;” and the third ² even extending in cases of extreme necessity to Christian Confession, and the *earnest desire* of the Sacrament. Doubtless, it is The All-seeing GOD alone who can decide on any individual case. Yet it is easy to see how the Catholic doctrine does at least open a wide door of charitable *hope* ³. How many even of those who are outwardly Schismatical, may not be *wholly* so, we can never know here. How far the sincerity of some, or the circumstances of others, may avail as excuses before GOD, HE only can decide. Still, while our charity “hopeth all things,” we know that where there is *doubt* only, there may be danger ; and charity itself would oblige us to warn ; for we think there *is* this peril ; and we warn those Churchmen of their greater peril, who sanction Religious principles, or frequent even doubtful assemblies, which the Church acknowledges not. They not only endanger themselves,

¹ Matt. xx. 22. ; and perhaps 1 Cor. xv. 29.

² Rom. x. 10. (which conveys the principle) ; and Luke xxiii. 42.

³ Our own Church recognizes this doctrine ; speaking in her Baptismal Office of the “ great necessity of the Sacrament *where it may be had* ;” and in the Catechism of its “ *general necessity*.” CHRIST affirmed generally the necessity of being “ born of water,” as the preliminary of “ entrance to His kingdom,” yet He promised admission thereto to the dying thief, who *confessed* Him with a penitent heart.

but by their example may fatally mislead the souls of their brethren. But let us take the extremest case that can be alleged, namely, that of persons wilfully guilty of total and deliberate Schism from the Apostolic Church. When we deny to such all share in the Church's peculiar grace here, or glory hereafter, are we denying them aught which they do not deny themselves? aught which they even wish to claim? For instance—The Church has ever maintained that Baptism in the Apostolic community conveys the most exalted and unearthly blessings, and by consequence maintains, that the unbaptized possess them not. But is it not a fact, that all such persons totally reject the notion of there being any spiritual value in Baptism? Does our uncharitableness then place them in a worse position than that which they voluntarily choose for themselves, and resolutely defend? Surely we are rather taking a high view of our own privileges and grace in CHRIST, than in any degree depriving others of theirs. We leave them where they place themselves. And it seems hard to call this a want of charity. It is impossible to say that we are depriving of Sacraments those who do not even pretend to them, except in form. It is strange and uncandid to say, that we UN-church those, who (in our sense of the word) do not even pretend to be Churches.

This charge of want of charity generally proceeds, too, from those who ought certainly to be the very last to bring it forward. They are our commonest assailants who themselves so gloomily narrow the circle of possible salvation, as to affirm that all shall inevitably perish, except that exceedingly small number whom they esteem in their peculiar sense, "spiritual," and "converted." We, on the contrary, whatever we think of the Church's Privileges, hold with St. Peter, that "in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of HIM¹;" and yet we are thought "uncharitable." Far from condemning on so tremendous a scale as they will venture to do, we pronounce no judgment personally on any:—and yet they call us "uncharitable." Doubtless we see unspeakable danger in the very idea of differing or dissenting and departing from the CHURCH² as descended from the Apostles of CHRIST; but methinks there is no bigotry in saying that.—"Now may the GOD of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to CHRIST JESUS!"

¹ Acts x. 35.

² See, on this subject, and generally, on the danger of Schism, S. Jerome's Ep. 69, &c. And concerning the peril of departing from the Bishops Catholic, see S. Ignatius ad Smyrn. ad Trall. et ad Phil.

And now, at the close of this review of the objections urged by vain man against the firm, abiding truth of God, it seems impossible wholly to repress the feeling which rises, on looking back on such melancholy indications of mental perversity.—The view of a series of such objections to such a Truth, accompanied as they are by a guilty host of unnamed minor objections, taking shelter beneath them, is almost enough to dishearten the Minister of CHRIST. It seems as if there were arranged side by side all the elaborate tokens of a Father's most tender care for a reckless family; and of their thankless contempt for his love and watchfulness. The very design of CHRIST's Ascension was to give "Apostles and prophets" to his people¹; but now there are objections to them all.—It were surely a revolting task to take by the hand the young but corrupted heir of some princely domain, and lead him through the stately halls of his fathers, and find him heartlessly sneering at their massy and unbroken grandeur, and treating with a rude contempt the mighty things and the noble of past times—"Objecting" to every thing! Mocking the now useless towers and unneeded battlements—Objecting to them as 'contrivances of cowardice.' Or pointing to the

¹ Ephesians iv. 8—12.

chapel, to the Cross, or to some ancestral effigy of Prayer—"Objecting" to them as symbols of decaying superstition! It would be miserable to witness such a wretched lack of natural piety in the heart of a child.—But is there not some parallel to it in what is seen among us, whensoever we "go about our Spiritual Zion, telling the towers thereof, marking well Her bulwarks, and considering Her palaces, to tell it to the generation following?" We are scarcely listened to with patience by many: and some even scorn to accompany us through our time-honoured courts. Too many modern Christians, thankless, cold-hearted children of our Holy Church, come very little short of realizing the picture we have drawn! They carelessly tread our solemn aisles, and we bid them move reverently "because of the angels¹." And they wonder at our "superstition" and "weakness!" And "the fathers" (say they) were ignorant men, and their works the cumbrous records of departed folly! And as to the Saints of early days—there are decided objections to their views; objections to their rules of sanctity; objections to their prayers and customs, and heaven-ward observances; objections, in a word, to almost every

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 10.

thing received from the Holy Founders of our Faith, and loved by all our Fathers !

The long line of the “ departed just,” like a still-continued choir of angels of Bethlehem, seem to be ever silently heralding “ peace on earth, good will to men,” while men weary not of raising objections thereto ; as if deeming it a hardship to be blessed !—Such is the Church’s mysterious history. An ALMIGHTY GOD ever “ waiting to be gracious :” and man rebelling against HIM ever !—God sending down HIS gifts of grace : Man spurning the blessing !—God “ bowing HIS heavens and coming down.” And man “ objecting” still !—“ How long shall it be, O LORD, to the end of these wonders !”

IV.

THE SUMMARY.

FROM THE EPISTLE¹.—"All the building fitly framed together groweth into an Holy Temple in the LORD."—EPH. ii. 2.

THE broad and essential distinction between the Catholic and the Rationalist views of the Christian Ministry, seems necessarily to imply distinct conceptions of the whole Christian Religion. This was briefly alluded to in our first Lecture, but must now be more fully drawn out (though, I fear, at the risk of some repetition) in order to show the bearing of the respective doctrines of the Ministry on the general Religious theory, and on the two classes of interpretation of Holy Scripture. This is the more necessary, because no arguments, however clear, will effectually touch the mind so long as a fundamentally incorrect notion of their whole

¹ The Feast of St. Thomas.

subject matter is inwardly cherished. So long as one theory is exclusively and implicitly relied on, the arguments which are built on another, essentially distinct, may be looked at as difficult, and perhaps unanswerable ; still they will not shake the previous faith of the listener. The arguer is moving, so to speak, in a parallel, or even a diverging line, in which his hearer sees, perhaps, no exact flaw, but he is sensible that it touches him not. Thus many will attend to a train of reasoning, see that it establishes its conclusions inevitably, and yet not be morally affected by it—not convinced, not really touched. Their minds fall back on some distinct and cherished principle which they have previously been accustomed to admit, perhaps, without questioning ; having been ever taught it, and so relying on it as a sort of “common sense” truth. This has been peculiarly the case in Religious controversy.—A certain view of the general system is received, and unless you can bring a man to think that this may be erroneous,—that is, unless you can shake a man’s faith in himself, and persuade him to call in question or examine even his fundamental notions—you have advanced but little towards convincing him of the truth ; notwithstanding the logical accuracy of your reasonings. It is also to be feared that a mistake as to the very ideality of the Christian Religion is not

only very possible, but very common¹. It is not, therefore, with any desire of mere systematizing that these two distinct theories of Christianity are now drawn out; but with a firm persuasion that there is a reality and a practical importance in the distinction.

Doubtless there are many modifications of opinion among Christians; but there are two bases on which they are very generally raised, and perhaps almost necessarily so; a basis of mental Principles, or a basis of Divine Institutions; a basis of intelligible "Doctrines," or of Heavenly Realities; of that which is abstract, or that which is concrete. And the former of these may be (and I trust, without offence) described as the Rationalized, or Sectarian,—the latter is the Catholic basis. The former, at first sight, seems more philosophical and elevated and popular—the latter, more positive, more real, and yet more humbling to the pride of human intellect.

It is with the latter, indeed, that we shall be especially concerned in this Lecture; but we must so far dwell on the former, as may be necessary

¹ See the former series of "Parochial Lectures," On The Holy Catholic Church, Lecture IV. p. 113, &c. in which I have explained this more fully.

for the sake of illustration and contrast. Instead however of formally arguing against the former theory, and attempting to disprove its basis, (which would draw us too far from our object,) let us rather endeavour to develop the true Catholic conception of Christianity, and show its exact coincidence with the literal Scriptures of Truth. An erring Christian man may by observing this be more likely to suspect, at least, the soundness of the opposite conception. There is a power in truth; and it is often as useful to state it clearly as to argue for it. Many men do not see even the apparent ground on which Church principles rest—they do not enter into our theory, so as to understand what they themselves dissent from. And on the other hand, many right-minded believers, from want of sufficient clearness of views, adopt a mode of defence which sanctions, or implies, Sectarian *principle*. How many Dissenters, for example, oppose us, on the ground of our union with the State; or of our having a written Liturgy; or written Sermons; or certain forms and ceremonies; forgetting that these are not specific *Church*-questions; that these might have been otherwise decided among us than they are, i. e. that we might not have been allied to the State, nor have been accustomed to a written Liturgy, nor written Sermons, and yet that our Churchmanship might

have been, in every principle, the same precisely.—And again, how many Churchmen defend our general system just as if the Clergy were the essential, that is, constituent body of the Church ; or defend our Episcopacy with confidence from insufficient texts ; or defend our Apostolicity on the ground of a Threefold order of Ministration being traceable even to Apostolic times : little thinking how far such kinds of defence are inaccurate, and even involve Sectarian principle.

But to resume ;—the popular idea ¹ seems to be, that Christianity is a complete Revelation of certain truths concerning GOD and a future state ; and the end to be aimed at, therefore, is the impressing men strongly with those truths, “ applying them” (as the phrase is) “ to individuals.” The Catholic conception is, that Christianity is a sustained Revelation, or Manifestation of realities ; and the great end to be attained is the participation therein.—Thus the Sectarian (according as his sentiments might be) would dwell much on the idea of CHRIST’S moral teaching, as being “ pure” and “ useful ;” or again, would look on His Mediation and Atonement, just as “ doctrine” to be believed. The Catholic would endeavour to regard CHRIST in

¹ See Lect. I. page 27.

a less abstract, a more literally Scriptural way, as The Mysterious Incarnation of Godhead (1 Tim. iii. 16); the now and Ever-existing link between us and DEITY (1 Tim. ii. 5.)—the medium whereby man is united unto GOD! And His mysterious Atonement would be regarded as an awful REALITY ever “manifest” in the Church! (Gal. iii. 1; 1 Cor. xi. 26.)—a REALITY to be partaken of, and more than a bare ‘truth’ to be believed in. (1 Cor. x. 16, 17.) The former would go no further than to think that the end to be attained is, the formation of a certain character in individuals, by certain moral means; and so the whole of the constitutions of Christianity—Scriptures, Sacraments, Ministries, and Churches, are but the means of accomplishing this end. The latter believes much more; namely, that the great end to be attained is the mystical incorporation of an unseen, yet eternal community, called even now, the “kingdom of heaven.” On the one system, we are independent beings: on the other, we are “blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” On the one system, it is metaphorically only that we are said to be “one body in CHRIST,” while we really are, and shall only be dealt with, as separate individuals: on the other, the very reverse is assumed; namely, that “we, being many, are one body in CHRIST,” in a mystical and Divine

sense. The question is—which view is more conformable to Holy Scripture?

Now, supposing the Sectarian idea to be fully adequate and right, is there not something very unaccountable, to say the least, even in the structure of the Christian system? Supposing (that is) that we were so discerning, and could see so far into God's designs, as to be able, for instance, to say, that the "conversion," (as it is called) or the moral change of an individual as such, were the sole end, to be produced by certain doctrines inwardly received; and that this is the whole of Christianity:—Is not the institution of what must then seem so strange a rite as 'Baptism with water,' quite unaccountable?—Of course it will be easy to say, that such a rite may be taken as a "type and sign" of spiritual truth; but is this cumbrous explanation satisfactory? Are not mere types and signs out of place, "out of keeping," so to speak, in a system so purely abstract?—At all events, must not all allow, that the existence of such an institution as Baptism (to name no other) is much more in accordance with the CHURCH doctrine of mystical incorporation, than with any other?—Much more suitable to a system which insists on a hidden virtue infallibly conveyed by the ordinance of the SON of GOD, than

to a system which reckons it "not essential," even if right at all? A thoughtful man can hardly fail to perceive, that any such institutes as those which are and ever have been common in all the Churches, are incumbrances to what is now thought the "simplicity of the Gospel,"—are at variance altogether with the modern spirit and principle. If the bringing of certain doctrines to the consciences of individuals were the sole or specific design, what a strangely inapplicable and unwieldy array of means must the whole Church system be! And yet, a Church, and certain institutions therein, are recognised in Scripture. And if so, then the Scriptural means of Christian edification scarcely seem, in the popular sense of the word, "simple;" but rather most elaborate.—By Divine direction, we see a Society of men enrolled, a community essentially distinct from every human one, and therefore exciting much jealousy. To certain of the body a Power is given of receiving or cutting off members; and spiritual consequences of incalculable magnitude seem annexed to the privilege of membership. The powers and prerogatives possessed by these rulers are expressed also in language, however obscure, yet, most solemn. (2 Cor. xiii. 10.) Whatever that language may imply, (Matt. xviii. 18.; 1 Cor. v. 5.) it is certainly Scriptural. There are very weighty expressions in the

Bible, relative to the Christian Ministry; and the Sectarian systems are so far from *needing* them, that they all find them to be "difficulties." And it is equally certain that they mean something. Now, without inquiring here what they do mean, we primarily point out their evident incongruity with a theory which makes individuals every thing, and the Church and Her powers nothing. We would point out that they are quite needless, and even impediments to that brief system which tells a man it is enough to "take his Bible and pray for the personal assistance of the HOLY SPIRIT, and judge for himself." It is quite certain that had the New Testament contained not one word about a Church, a "washing with water," a "laying on of hands," a partaking "of ONE bread," and the like; the systems of Rationalists might still be just what they are. They who reduce Christianity to a code of principles, would lose nothing, by the blotting out of every text containing any trace of Christian Church authority from the Scriptures. And must not any hypothesis of Christianity which is thus partial, be suspected as possibly not commensurate with the Divine teaching of our Heavenly Master? Let us not be mistaken as if we said, that there are not "doctrines" to be believed, and "principles" to be inculcated in Christianity; we only insist that such a statement does

not contain a complete idea of Christianity, and if taken alone, contains a positively false, because inadequate idea. And it is necessary to see the extreme danger of theorizing, where we ought simply to believe, lest our theory should be more compact than complete, more simple than true.

But let us attempt now still further to review the whole subject in an analytical and practical way, apart from theories, though it be at the risk of prolixity or tautology. Observe how the Catholic Religion embraces simply and honestly the view of truth just as it is historically presented in the Scriptures. At the beginning of the Gospel, the Baptist announces "the kingdom of God" at hand. Soon The Great TEACHER appears,—GOD and Man in One Person. HE preaches truths and corrects errors;—but is that all? Does HE leave the truth to propagate itself? Or is it simply a system of Divine Principles, which HE inculcates? Or, has HE not to establish the "Kingdom of heaven?"—Yes, this Heavenly Personage, this no common teacher or prophet, this SON of GOD, had to found among men a celestial community. HE soon began to incorporate a Visible society endowed with invisible powers. HE called twelve men, and ordained them; declared that HE appointed unto them "a Kingdom even as His

FATHER had appointed unto HIM a Kingdom;” staid with them three years; instructed them generally; manifested Himself unto them otherwise than unto the world;” gave them to see “mysteries of the kingdom of God;” promised that they should “sit on twelve thrones” as Vicegerents in the spiritual dominion; and ere HE left them, “breathed on them”—“gave them the Holy Ghost,” accompanying it with most extraordinary words—told them to “baptize, and teach whatsoever HE had commanded”—and promised to send HIS SPIRIT to guide them, and in some exalted sense to be HIMSELF “with them” (Matt. xxvii.) to the world’s end.—Acting literally on His instructions, the Apostles no sooner received the SPIRIT promised, than they proceeded to set up their spiritual kingdom: First setting forth the truth, according to their Master’s example; then enrolling all who received it as members of their new Society, by means of that literal rite which had been Divinely commanded. And literally did the Apostles accept the statement of their LORD, that HE had given to them “a Kingdom.” Did any man receive their doctrine?—immediately he was addressed in terms like unto the “follow Me” of CHRIST, “Arise and be BAPTIZED”—“have fellowship with us”—“Be ye followers of us.” So systematically at first did they keep “together,” “with one ac-

cord," until much people was "added unto them." (Acts ii. 41—47.) So naturally did they assume¹, and the people allow, their heavenly rule, and Power, that at the outset, as far as possible, every matter of consequence to the new community was transacted by them, personally. Was property sold for the poor?—"they brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet." Were distributions made to the needy?—the Apostles themselves did it, as matter of course; till finding it too burdensome, at their own suggestion deputies were appointed for the work. Were new converts added? or did any thing of consequence transpire in distant parts? even in "matters of discipline," and "outward forms and ceremonies?"—it was "reported to the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem." (Acts xv. 2.) And when, in time, Christian communities multiplied in remoter regions, beyond the immediate personal inspection of the Apostles, and their chief companions, subordinate Rulers were instituted; while an Apostle having "the care of all the Churches," travelled from place to place as the organ of the Apostolic government;

¹ Of course there were some that disputed even in their own days the Power of the Apostles themselves.—See 2 Tim. iv. 10, 16; 3 John 10. The Apostles shrank not from asserting their own "POWER which the Lord had given them to edification"—"A Spirit of POWER and of love"—"Not that I have not POWER,"—said St. Paul, (2 Thess. iii. 9.)

visiting again and again the various Christian Societies; giving them the Apostolic traditions (2 Thess. ii. 15.) and directions, "leaving them the decrees for to keep." (Acts xvi. 4.) So indefatigable were the Apostles in carrying out the arrangements of their spiritual kingdom, and so prominent a part of their teaching was this notion of spiritual sovereignty and power, that even their enemies were struck by it, and charged them with setting up another "king, one JESUS" (a charge which would never be brought by unbelievers against the mere teachers of new principles¹). They taught everywhere, that a membership of their spiritual "kingdom" was necessary to all who would enjoy its peculiar privileges. (Acts ii. 41. 47; 1 John i. 3, 5; ii. 19.) And that membership was attained in the One only way which CHRIST appointed, namely, by Baptism. So that even a new Apostle, fresh called by CHRIST'S voice from heaven, was not deemed a member, or in a state of spiritual privilege with

¹ The manner in which modern sectarians sometimes profess to recognise "only the kingship and headship of CHRIST," affords a striking proof of this; for no one misunderstands *them*, as some did the Apostles, by supposing them to be establishing a temporal rule. The Apostolic system evidently had that in it, which furnished some apparent ground for such a mistake; and so also the Catholic Church is sometimes charged with "interfering with the State."

them—his “sins not washed away,”—till he was baptized. As it was said to St. Paul himself, “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.” (Acts xxii. 16.) All the baptized people, that is, the Christians, or the “Church” of every place, were commanded to “meet together” at stated times. And among those baptized communities, marvellous gifts abounded, which were exercised in their assemblies in a most wonderful manner. (1 Cor. xiv.) But the most gifted of these were alike subjected to the Apostles. “If any man,” said St. Paul, “be spiritual,” still let him submit.—All this, in point of fact, was the manner in which the Apostles acted out the directions of their Master, in establishing the “kingdom of heaven.”

And then, mark in what manner the Apostles put forth, by degrees, their latent spiritual powers. We saw that on the necessity arising, assistants in some minor matters were appointed; but the *Apostles* suggested it. And these assistants (named Deacons) had thereupon the full power of the Apostles, for executing a certain commission; but no more. They were the servants of the Apostles and of the CHURCH; not endowed with the full grace of Apostolicity, but with specific authority to execute certain duties in the Apostles' names.

Had the Apostles found it necessary to appoint other officers, doubtless they would have done it; and so indeed they did, as necessity arose. They “appointed Elders in every city,” (Acts xiv. 23; Tit. i. 5.) still, by letters if not by other means, retaining their own spiritual supremacy over all these scattered communities; here and there, by degrees only, placing a Spiritual Ruler, endowed with full Apostolic power—just as Timothy was “sent” to Ephesus, and Titus “left in Crete,” (Tit. i. 4, 5.) to take the oversight and charge of the Churches and their general teachers. Thus from year to year, with more and more of regularity, arose the kingdom of heaven on earth.

It was indeed a mighty system rising throughout the world, and reduced by slow degrees to regularity and form. But two points seem settled and clear from the very first,—the necessity of Baptism to membership in the Community, and the necessity of the Apostles’ sanction to *every* thing in the Community Universal¹. And these two points being as clear and undeniable as any can possibly be, they simplify and make plain many of the supposed difficulties of that unformed state of things, which must have presented itself

¹ Apost. Can. 37. Ed. Coloniae, 1538.

first of all in the Christian societies. Supposing, for instance, it were even made quite clear, that any Christian man, at first, was permitted to administer Baptism (though there really is no proof of this, but, on the contrary, a great deal against it), yet, knowing, as we do for certain, the Supremacy of the Apostles, we may be sure that no such thing would have been practised without their temporary sanction. The same Apostles who gave Deacons a portion of their power, to “minister to the necessities of saints,” might if they thought fit have given to other Christians, permission to Baptize, in their absence. And this might be more readily accorded to those private Christians who had, as so many had, supernatural gifts. But it took, and plainly must have taken, many years to reduce to uniform order so far spread and rapidly-risen a system as that of the Christian Church. It would take time to ascertain in remote parts the will of the Apostles; and in the interim, doubtless, many confusions would naturally arise, especially in those scarcely-formed Communities which perhaps had no settled Elders or Deacons, much less Bishops. Since, then, the principle is clear, that every Baptized man was held to be a subject of the Apostles’ dominion, i. e. the “kingdom of heaven” or Church, it is plain, that the validity of any act of a ministerial kind would be derived from the

Apostolical permission. And it is on this principle, and this alone, that Lay-Baptism can be said to have had any Primitive sanction. In so far as the Apostle, and afterwards the Bishop, might allow it, it might have a *pro tanto* validity ; and so the Bishop was deemed to complete Baptism by laying on his hands in Confirmation. (Acts viii. 17) Such is the language of the early Fathers, not only with respect to Baptism, but every other matter ; as for instance, Marriage, which could not be sanctified by Roman Registrars had such existed, but was reckoned base and unchristian unless it had the Bishop's sanction.

From all this you perceive, that, strictly speaking, there is, in theory, but One Order of Ministers necessary to CHRIST'S Church, and that Order, as it consisted of Apostles at first, so it does now of those whom the Apostles left as their Successors, just as CHRIST left Them. The Apostles, it seems, thought fit not to delegate their full authority to many, but only to here one and there one. They might have constituted a plenary Successor of themselves in every congregation of the Baptized, and have created no other Order of Ministers ; but they did not so. In that case every ordained man must have been a Bishop, and capable of ordaining others. But the general Unity of their

kingdom would have been interfered with by such a subdivision into petty provinces. Doubtless they were led by the SPIRIT of CHRIST, and His own pattern when among them, to adopt another course ; and they created officers with derived and partial powers, to exercise them to a certain extent and no farther. First, they allowed certain persons to Baptize ; and then, very soon, they farther permitted others to consecrate the Holy Eucharist and rule the Congregation, and use, in their absence, the powers of binding and loosing souls ; of which latter we have on record one very solemn instance : (1 Cor. iv. 5.) “ In the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, when ye are gathered together, *and my Spirit—with* the Power of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, deliver such an one unto Satan.” St. Paul thus commissioning others in his absence to act in his name and CHRIST’s. But there was yet one exercise of power which the Apostles reserved to themselves and those of their Coadjutors who, by the voice of all Antiquity, became their Successors in the Church, and that was the power of “ laying on of hands.” And thus was accomplished and set in order, by Divine Inspiration, that Threefold Ministry, shadowed forth in CHRIST’s own lifetime, and which has continued ever since.

In the specific reservation of this Power of im-

parting the SPIRIT, which the Apostles made to themselves, there is a sacred beauty and fitness, on which, for a moment, we shall do well to meditate. —By retaining in the possession of themselves, and a chosen few, the whole power of spiritually Commissioning the Ministers of the Church, they effectually provided for the Unity and subordination of their kingdom, and ensured the reverent estimation of their unseen powers, as Vicars of a Heavenly Master. And then this was still farther secured by the retention of the power of Confirmation. For by this it came to pass that every member of the Universal Church, every individual subject of the “kingdom of heaven,” came necessarily into personal contact, so to speak, with him who was the immediate representative of CHRIST. Thus was recognised, in a degree, that intimate union with Apostles or Apostolical men, the contemplation of which in its fulness raised in after days all the eloquent aspirations of St. John Chrysostom. Thus immediately from the hands of Apostles and their Successors every Christian man receives to this hour the higher blessings of CHRIST.—There was a fatherly affection in the appointment; as if the Holy Apostles were anxious, and their Successors after them, to see with their own eyes each one of the uncounted multitude of the great Catholic family. (Acts xx. 28.)

It must not be thought, however, that the ceremony of "laying on of hands" was in itself essential either to Confirmation or Ordination¹. For it is conceivable that any other ceremony might have been adopted. The INTENTION constituted the act of conveyance of the grace of CHRIST, not only in Confirmation, but in Ordination. Otherwise indeed there would be no distinction between the two. So St. Matthias was ordained "by lot;"—and the first Apostles themselves by CHRIST's "breathing on them." Otherwise, also, Holy Orders, [if not Confirmation too], would be a proper Sacrament, which it is not, because it was not by CHRIST essentially tied to any form; although it is now virtually so to us by Universal consecrated usage in the Church. In thus speaking of the intention of the Apostles as constituting the validity and essence of the Gift which they conferred, (which it plainly must have done, else all distinctions would have been destroyed, and whenever they laid their hands even on a Deacon, or Deaconess, or a child, full Apostolical grace must have been given, whether they meant it or not; which is absurd,)—it must not be misunderstood as though it were meant to support any Romish Doctrine of Intention. It is just the reverse. For if Holy Orders [or Confirmation]

¹ See the Homily of our Church, on the Common Prayer and Sacraments. And Notes No. II.

were a proper Sacrament, it would have a positive grace specifically annexed to a positive *form*, superseding all intention on the part of the agent. Neither, again, must it be taken to mean that the intention of any particular Bishop is now necessary, to his official action, to secure its validity, as the medium of grace. We are not speaking of any thing personal and private, but of that which may be gathered from the heaven-guided practice—the official and authoritative intention—of the Founders of the CHURCH, in this matter, which has ever, *in fact*, descended to the Bishops, and is not now a mutable thing. Before the decease of the Apostles, “laying on of hands” had become the recognised ceremony of Ordination and Confirmation; and so at length, the Apostle St. Paul, in his later years (A. D. 64, or 65), speaks of the DOCTRINE “of laying on of hands,” (Heb. vi. 2,) which by that time was a known and admitted point of rudimental Christianity.

Towards the close of the Apostolic career the Christian system universal seemed to have become thus arranged with general uniformity of discipline: so that after the destruction of Jerusalem, according to the prophecy, “before that generation passed away,” the “SON of Man came in His kingdom,” with more of fulness, completeness, and

glory than heretofore. While, in the early history of the Acts of the Apostles, we see the elements of the Christian kingdom gradually assembled and composed, neither reason nor history justify us in looking for the complete system of the Apostles until towards the close of their career. Even the extant Epistles to the Churches, seem to indicate various stages in the development of the Christian System. (1 Thess. iii. 10, 11; 1 Cor. xi. 34.) The Apostles imparted of their powers, for the edification of the Body of CHRIST, just as necessity arose and Churches spread, and miracles and gifts supernatural became less frequent. And when they left the world, they left their perpetual power to appointed Successors, in all the great departments of the Spiritual kingdom; bequeathing likewise the promise of the great King of saints, "Lo I am with you always."—And so, at last, (to return to the metaphor of our text,) "All the building was fitly framed together," and grew "into an Holy Temple in the LORD."

Such is the clear historical view of Christianity, and the statement of it is an analytical statement of the Catholic Religion from the beginning. We do not find the facts of Scripture and History to be "difficulties."—But let us now, finally, endeavour to combine what has been said, and briefly

consider, in a more synthetical way, our whole Christianity, as it lies before us both in the Gospels and Epistles.

In the former, CHRIST is instructing His Apostles and witnessing to the Jews. In the latter, the Apostles, "in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 10), "as though Christ did it by them" (2 Cor. v. 20.), are instructing the CHURCHES, and through them witnessing to the world. The general impression wrought on the mind by the Gospel narrative of CHRIST and His followers, is that of an isolated company of men, having little in common with those by whom they were surrounded, and among whom they moved, as bent on some unearthly enterprise. And in like manner, the impression left by the perusal of an Apostolic Epistle is, of a separated band, a "peculiar people," in the midst of a world "lying in wickedness."—Looking a little closer, we soon recognize a Purity of principle and a Divine mystery alike unsearchable. CHRIST Himself in the Gospel speaks with a heavenly emphasis of those who are endowed with a certain high character, as "BLESSED;" telling us that "their's is the Kingdom of heaven." And every Epistle opens with an exalted delineation of the like persons—the "elect," the "called," the "sanctified," the "BLESSED in

CHRIST JESUS." They who were so addressed were deemed, in a lofty sense, already the heirs of GOD and "joint-heirs with CHRIST," having "received power to become sons of GOD (John i. 12.), and having been Baptismally "born of GOD." (1 John iii. 9.) Each had a Sacred character, yet not as an individual, but as a member of a Sacred Body. Among them there were distinctions, and yet there was an identity; "diversity of gifts," but Oneness of grace. They were "all members one of another," but "all members had not the same office;" they were "one," they were "brethren" in CHRIST (as He had commanded them to be); but some were to "rule," and some to "submit;" some to "overlook" and "watch," and some to "obey."—And the idea of the Oneness of Christians, (and the mysterious nature of it,) seems to pervade the whole New Testament, and is that which forces itself upon our attention, open it wherever we may. Not only did CHRIST pray to His FATHER for this, but He appointed a Mysterious ordinance, by which His people were to become One Body: And another more mysterious still, by which their Oneness might be Divinely sustained. "By ONE SPIRIT ye are Baptized into ONE body;" and "know ye not that the SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you?" said St. Paul; as if intimating somewhat which the Baptized might apprehend, but which could not

be spoken. And again, "I speak as to wise men," said the same holy Apostle to the Corinthian Church—glancing only, as it were, at The Mystery of unutterable grace—"I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the COMMUNION of the BLOOD of CHRIST? The Bread which we break, is it not the COMMUNION of the BODY of CHRIST?" And then he adds—passing from our Union with CHRIST to our Communion with all Saints by means of the Most Holy Eucharist, "We are ONE body, *for* we are all partakers of that ONE Bread!" And in the judgment of the same Apostle, no language seemed too severe to condemn the willing violaters of this Union. It was sacrilege to injure the least of the members; how much more then to divide the Body? That the Baptized were "One with CHRIST,"—that the Communicating believer was already, as it were, linked with the verities of eternity,—were transcendent Mysteries; not bare metaphors, but earthly forms of stating Heavenly Truths. And if every member of CHRIST was thus sacredly looked on, so the more also was the whole Body. "Ye are a chosen generation," says St. Peter, "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."—Every Christian indeed was a "Temple of the HOLY GHOST:" but as S. Clement of Alexandria saith, the CHURCH is GOD'S GREAT

Temple—"builded together for an habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT."

Here, then, is opened to us the great Catholic idea of the Christian Revelation—That the mystical COMPANY of CHRIST's people, as such, were clothed with the heavenly Powers, and "blessed with the heavenly blessings."—It was in the temple "builded together" that the Divine glory vouchsafed to dwell.—To the Church, the elect assembly, the promises had been made. To the BODY, when in solemn meeting, the special and highest grace of CHRIST had been granted; (and so at the appointed "gatherings together" the Blessed Eucharist was usually celebrated.)—From the beginning of the Gospel this had been indicated, so that even the instituted Apostolate arose, as at CHRIST's command, out of the CHURCH, more as the Divine instrument of Her invisible power, than the possessor of aught in itself¹. CHRIST's words, "Thou art Peter," were instantly connected with the promise of building the CHURCH against which "the gates of hell should not prevail." The commission, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," was instantly followed by words

¹ Called, therefore, "the *συναξίς*" in the early Church.

² A similar principle seems hinted, John vii. 22.

conveying this power of absolving and condemning, to the CHURCH, and not to the *persons* of the Apostles¹, except as God's instruments *in* the CHURCH; "*for*," it is directly added, "where two or three are *gathered together* in MY name, there am I." In accordance with which declaration, we see (in a passage before quoted) that an Apostolic condemnation of a sinner was pronounced. "In the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, when ye (i. e. the Church) are *gathered together*." (1 Cor. v. 4.) In like manner we may trace how, from the first, the highest Authority, as well as sacredness and favour, (Luke xxiv. 33.) was attributed to the "assembling together" of Christians, which therefore they were urged "not to forsake." Thus when the door of faith was first "opened to the Gentiles," the Church was "*gathered together*," (Acts xiv. 27.) and the matter rehearsed. When the question of Judaizing arose, again "the Apostles

¹ This may perhaps throw some light on Tertullian's meaning in a passage quoted by Bishop Kaye, (p. 226.) The word "*consensus*" seems to allude to the expression of our Lord, "where two or three are *gathered together*;" indeed in the same connexion, he quotes this very text. And I would suggest, that Tertullian's argument in this place, however ill expressed, may perhaps imply, and certainly requires no more than is stated above, viz. that the Sacramental grace was primarily or essentially in the CHURCH, and not originally in the *persons* of any individuals as such.

and Elders *came together*." (Acts xv. 6.) When the Apostle St. Peter was to be miraculously delivered from prison, "there were many *gathered together* praying" for him. (Acts xii. 12.) The announcement of the risen SAVIOUR had been made to the "eleven *gathered together*." (Luke xxiv. 33.) And the blessings attendant on these united assemblings was not to be disturbed by Jewish or Gentile jealousies. Since, they had all been "quickened *together*, and raised up *together*, and made to sit *together* in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS." (Eph. ii. 5.) And so Christians might be addressed as "heirs *together* of the grace of life;" (1 Pet. iii. 7.) exhorted to be "followers *together*" of the Apostles; (Phil. iii. 17.) and admonished to "strive *together*" for the "faith of the Gospel."

The majestic privileges of the Saints, in Union with CHRIST and Communion with one another, if we contemplated them aright, would so overwhelm our spirits, that we could not think of the "solemn assemblies" without coveting to be there! Little as it is thought of, there is a special awfulness in the "meeting together" of the members of this Heavenly, yet earthly,—this Invisible, yet visible—Society; when God's Eye is on every one, when CHRIST, though unseen, is "in the midst,"—and the "hosts of God" are encamping

around ! All Christians then constituting, in some sacred and lofty sense, a "kingdom of Priests¹ ;"—yet ministering only through that Consecrated organ which CHRIST, the great High Priest, appointed, — the Bishop, or his representative.— "God is very greatly to be feared in the Council of the Saints ! and to be had in reverence of all that are round about HIM."—Well might the ancient Fathers delight to speak of the dignity of being a Christian ! It is observable, however, for our instruction and warning, even in this, that Tertulian, after he embraced the Montanist heresy, carried out so erroneously the idea we have been dwelling on, as to assign to any Christian, in cases of necessity, the exercise of inherent Priestly functions. Such, even then, was the perilous rashness of Private Judgment. For though the Priestly functions are doubtless in the CHURCH, granted unto Her for Her blessedness and perfection (1 Cor. iii. 22.); and though in our Solemn Assemblies "all the people of the LORD are holy," all the Baptized in such wise sharers of the Priesthood, that they join in our 'sacred offerings ;' yet, we must beware of the "gainsaying of Core." (Jude 11.) The Catholic Church has ever held that Her Priesthood cannot be effectually exercised other-

¹ See Notes, No. V.

wise than in conformity with the original commands and ordinations of Christ. And from HIM alone the first Ministers of the Church derived their appointment, (St. Paul speaking of HIS as "the Ministry received OF THE LORD:" See also Col. iv. 17.), and afterwards conveyed it to others, whom they had chosen, and on whom they "laid their hands." And thus St. Paul, while anxious to *vindicate and prove to the Church*, as the constituent body, his right to the Ministry, at the same time scruples not to claim and exercise its loftiest Powers *as his own*, (2 Cor. xiii. 10) and commands the Church's obedience. . . . So mysteriously is "all the building fitly framed together, and groweth into an Holy Temple in the LORD."

Here let us pause: Let any man recall, in thought, the Scripture language concerning the CHURCH's privileges, and the MINISTERIAL PREROGATIVES; let him compare it with all that has now been said; then let his mind revert to the notions of the Rationalist; and draw his own conclusion;—And whatever his personal *belief* may be, he will hardly fail to perceive, that the system which is every where supposed throughout the New Testament, differs from a mere code of principles to be "applied" to individuals—differs

in kind,—as widely as the mysterious and appointed Sacrifice of Abel differs from the Rational devotion of Cain.

MAY GOD give us grace to weigh these things ; and “ that not lightly, or after the manner of dissemblers with HIM ! ” Some, who are not yet members of the Church, may be wishing, perhaps, to put these thoughts far from them, sustaining themselves with the belief, that they *have* partaken of Christian blessings apart from the Church ; and similar reflections. We only say to them, that self-deception on such a matter is but too easy ! And if that be true which we have now literally taken from God’s word, then it is certain that they are, at the best, in a very deficient state, and “ come behind in many a good gift ! ” More than this might indeed be said, without overstepping truth or charity : for those who have heard these things, cannot afterwards be as though they had not. But let each think of it for himself. Whatever may be said of those who are unwittingly out of the “ kingdom of heaven ” below, unbaptized, or only doubtfully baptized by some one who had only his *own* authority to do it ; whatever be thought of the present amount of grace, or future reward of such, if they go on according to their best, in the course they find themselves in,—

some of them haply verging on the very borders of our land of promise,—far different is *their* case who *might* have known and embraced the truth. To such we say, in CHRIST's words, "Verily the kingdom of GOD is come nigh unto you!" . . . The foolish virgins in the parable *thought* their lamps seemed to burn brightly, and emulated the light of the heavenly-wise; but when the Bridegroom came, they were found unsupplied with the needful oil, and went out in utter darkness!

But let not those who are of the "household of faith" be self-confident! "By the grace of GOD, we are what we are!" And let the consciousness of our sinful neglect stir us up to pray for the fuller restoration of the Church's grace to us Her degenerate children. It is of little value to believe in a Priesthood, without we *use* it. May GOD forgive His Priests and people for their joint forgetfulness of their many unearthly privileges!—the very belief whereof seemed a short time since almost dying away from very disuse! Of a truth, we of the English Church are blessed beyond others, would we but apprehend our privileges! Brought nigh, as we are, to our LORD CHRIST, with such abundant mercy and undeserved! If we come short of plenary grace in HIM, what shall we dare to plead in the Day of account?

“What manner of persons ought we to be?” for we have “come unto the City of the Living GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels; to the general Assembly and Church of the first-born enrolled in heaven!—to GOD the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the perfected just; and to JESUS the MEDIATOR of the New Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling!”—Would that the feeling of CHRIST’s first disciples were ours! “LORD, to whom else shall we go? THOU hast the words of eternal life.” Would that we were more thankful to GOD for the present blessings of His Church! Would that we used our Prayers, and tried them well, before we talked of amending them; or understood our holy offices, instead of seeking to shorten them!—Have we now, in this late century, to seek out new faith—some new instructor or guide? GOD deliver us from this blindness! May HE help His people to see what treasures of unknown grace lie hidden in His Holy Church among us! “We have all and abound.” Let us only “give diligence” thereto, that when CHRIST cometh, “we may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless!”

“LORD, I have loved the Habitation of THY House, and the place where THINE honour dwelleth!”—So holy David could say from the very

depths of his soul : and shall we who are brought into a holier place, "the Habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT," be forbidden to give utterance to as ardent a love—a devotion as deep and pure?—

O HOLY CHURCH OF ENGLAND! Brightest and fairest province of the realm of heaven on earth! What shining paths of truth and holiness are Thine!—And they are thronged by all Thy many Saints, farther than eye can trace through long past ages! What rivers of full grace flow through Thy mighty channels! What living fountains send forth their waters, refreshing evermore the weary and parched soul! Within Thy hallowed walls Thy saintly children trod in the ancient days—(the "old times of which our Fathers have told us"),—they whose monuments of goodness and glory are around us—in whose prayers we pray to the ETERNAL FATHER of all—in whose Psalms "we praise THEE O GOD, we acknowledge THEE to be THE LORD," from age to age.—O HOLY CHURCH of the many wise and good! O CHURCH of patient Martyrs and godly Confessors!—with whom we hold such mystical Communion, such "fellowship one with another," that the "blood of CHRIST here cleanseth us!"—To GOD be glory in Thee, O CHURCH of our Land! throughout all ages, world without end! Amen.

NOTES.

NOTES.

No. I.

It seems alike congruous to human nature, and consistent with every Divine dispensation to say, that man is more effectually influenced by the personal instrumentality of his fellow man, than by any other means. Statesmen and politicians seem to have seen this; and in every age have acted upon it; and have thought it necessary to give their sanction and support to a priesthood, even for the attainment of worldly ends. The lower classes of the community also, bear unequivocal testimony to the same truth—the suitability of the living Priesthood as the effective means of influencing human nature. Even among those classes of our own people, who affect to make light of the authority of the Ministry, it is remarkable how much that authority is *felt* after all; and how much even the systematic rejecters of the established Priesthood, are accustomed to impute high power and efficacy to the ministrations, and often to the very persons, of their own self-sent ministers. Books have their use—but Man directly influences man, in a more vital way.

And more than this. Some men *naturally* influence their fellows more than others: and some men *Divinely*; that is by Divine appointment. It is true, for instance, that by the very necessity of our social nature and condition, we affect one another in a very important degree; and that it is even a duty sometimes to exert our moral influence on our

brethren. And the degree in which we are able to accomplish this, will be variously determined. But beyond the natural influence which we thus exercise, there is an instituted influence, as much a matter of *fact* as the former. Keeping to the religious view of this question only, I would thus further explain :

It is evident that in every age, one man may be a blessing to another, by personally instructing him to the best of his power : or by praying for him, to Almighty God. Every good man may possess this power of mediately blessing his fellow men ; but some men more than others.—A Howard may thus bless very “effectually.” And, generally, the “effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” But some there have been in every age, who, according to the Divine testimony, have had power to give authoritative blessing. (1 Sam. iii. 19.) Some have been from time to time appointed and endowed by the DEITY, “to bless, and to curse, in the name of the LORD.” (1 Chron. xxiii. 13.) Generally this was the assigned function of the Priesthood, and was declared to pertain to them “for ever.” But “from the beginning it was so ;” Job blessed his three friends, (Job xlii. 8.) and Noah his sons, (Gen. ix.) and before the Levitical priesthood was set up, Melchisedec “blessed Abraham.” Isaac “blessed Jacob and could not reverse it” though he heartily wished to do so : and Joseph, again, blessed his two sons, *officially*, and contrary to his own intention. (Gen. xlviii. 9.) Balaam, we see, also, was sent for to “curse” Israel, and he “blessed them altogether,” though he wished not to do it : (Num. xxii. 11.) so that it was no peculiar privilege of the Jewish nation or their ancestors to be able to impart an authoritative blessing. (Matt. xxiii. 3.) And we find the same to hold in the Christian dispensation. (Acts x. 41.) Being reviled “we bless,” said the Apostle. Say “PEACE be to this house,” was our LORD’s direction to His Ministers ; “and if the Son of peace be there, *YOUR PEACE* shall rest upon it.” So that at the end of his epistles St. Paul *sends* his

Apostolic blessing "under his own hand." And "without all contradiction (he argues) the less is blessed of the better." (Heb. vii. 7. Deut. xxi. 5 ; xxvii. 14.) All men can pray for blessing, but *some* can "bless." So, every man can *read* "the Absolution," but "God hath given POWER and commandment to HIS MINISTERS, to declare and PRONOUNCE it." (So St. James says, "If any man (not, if any *poor* man, only, as some seem to take it) be sick, let him call for the Priests of the CHURCH.")—And this depends not on the goodness of the MAN. A Judas was an Apostle.

Let any one follow out in his own mind these hints ; and he will see nothing either unphilosophical or unscriptural in expecting in these days also the blessings of an instituted Priesthood. God's plan ever is, to use *men* as instruments of good to men. Revelation has ever recognized such an institute as the living Ministry. All infidelity is an attempt at "codification."

II.

At the close of the fourth Lecture I have made some observations on the INTENTION of the Church Catholic, as constituting, in a measure, the essence of the validity of certain of Her Ordinances. It will be difficult to clear this statement from the possibility of misrepresentation, and even misapprehension : I would request that what I have said at p. 128, &c. may be re-read and considered. The Doctrine of Laying on of hands is recognized in Scripture ; but there is no command of CHRIST concerning this, in the same way that there is a command concerning Baptism and the Eucharist. It seems an institute of the Apostles and the Primitive Church ; and may perhaps be looked on as an instance of the early exercise of the Church's inherent power and grace ; for the institute certainly received the sanction of Scripture, before the close of the Sacred Canon. So that it would be impossible to say

how dangerous it might not be, to depart from the Church's Ordinance of Laying on of hands. I trust therefore that none will imagine, that what is here said can fairly be made to sanction the loose notion, that any part of the Church Catholic can now voluntarily originate and ordain a Ministry in a *new* way; and without imposition of hands. The uncertainty, not to say peril of presumption in any such case, will be quite sufficient to guard against the fatal folly of such a thought. How far the grace of the Apostolate is ordinarily now allied even to the very *act* of "laying on of hands," it may be impossible to say; still it is important in many respects to observe, that the Laying on of hands is not so strictly of the nature of a proper sacrament, as that the divine grace is always necessarily allied to that form of ordination exclusively. There is advantage in considering that in *theory* it may not be so, though there could be no safety or certainty in deliberately *acting* on such a doubtfully understood theory.

Even the Roman Controversialists do not agree that the Laying on of hands is *the* specifically Sacramental act;—the outward form to which only of necessity the inward grace is allied. Though I cannot help thinking that it would much benefit their argument, if they were agreed on this point. The Doctrine which attributes the essence of Ordination to the uniform Intention of the Church Catholic may be, of course, very easily cavilled at; but still even the Romanist must, to a certain extent, rely on some such Doctrine, and such a Doctrine is that, perhaps, which alone will harmonize the conflicting Roman theories. In its very nature it is a Doctrine which admits not of strict definition. It rises simply out of the truth, that the gifts of CHRIST were to the CHURCH, and not primarily or inherently in individuals, as such.

This theoretical conception of these ordinances will serve greatly to assist us in meeting a theoretical difficulty, not unfrequently brought against the Doctrine of the Succession. It is said: 'Is it not very conceivable, after all that has been urged, that during the long course of ages, in *some* countries

at least, some one break in the Apostolic chain *might* have occurred? Is it not a consequence, in that case, that all subsequent Ordinations would be very doubtful? To which we reply, 'Point out *the fact*.' We challenge you to find it; a bare supposition can have but little force as an argument. And then, supposing the fact to be discovered, That a certain Bishop had obtained his place in the Church by invalid means—what is the consequence? Could he perpetuate such an invalid Succession? Certainly not; for in Ordaining others, he would be associated with *two* other Bishops, whose valid grace would confer true Orders, notwithstanding the inefficacy of the third coadjutor in the Ordination. But, putting the case at the very worst, even if such an instance could be found, it would only affect the condition of the single Church over which the nominal Bishop presided; and that only so far as the particular functions of that Bishop were concerned; and it would be corrected at his death. And all this may be urged in reply even by Romanists. But we who deny Holy Orders to be a proper Sacrament of CHRIST, can add more than this. We suggest, that in the case of a Bishop obtaining his place in the Church by some invalid means, which the Church had mistaken for valid, the Church's INTENTION might avail sufficiently, for the time being at least, to counteract the effects of man's sin; and so give value even to the ministrations of the Church which had been so severely visited, as to have such a Bishop set over them. So we meet the theoretical difficulty by a theoretical answer.

III.

It is not unusual with those who are more anxious to make difficulties than to understand the Catholic truth, to speak of the "vagueness of the rule of S. Vincent," and the arduousness of the task imposed by the Doctors of the *Via Media* on all their scholars. That it is easy enough to construct a theo-

retical difficulty of this sort, no one will question. But it behoves every Christian to consider well, whether any "dilemmas of Churchmen" can be stated which might not (without any very great ingenuity) be turned into 'Dilemmas of CHRISTIANS.' Doubtless it is a *trial*, (and God intended it to be so, 1 Cor. xi. 19.) to see so many diversities and divisions in the Church; yet candid judges will hardly decide, that English Churchmen have more difficulties of this kind than other men; or that we should be likely to escape similar "dilemmas" by forsaking the CHURCH for any other community. And in spite of the ingenuity of men, common sense will generally understand the practical use and application of S. Vincent's rule, "Quod semper," &c. An instance of the ordinary manner of its practical employment, may be seen, to a certain extent, in Lecture II. p. 51, and will suggest at once to the minds of many, the way in which the English Churchman can and does proceed. Difficult as the theory of the *Via Media*, and the popular recognition of truth by S. Vincent's test may in theory be made to seem; yet it is, I imagine, practically and as a matter of experience acted on, to a much wider extent, both in our own Church and the *Roman*, than is commonly noticed, or thought of. In illustration, the twenty-first chapter of St. Luke might be advantageously consulted. Our LORD there assumes (what in fact is daily seen) that heresies should arise. And He tells His people not to follow the "Lo here is CHRIST!" and "Lo there!" Of course it might always be easy to say—which is THE CHURCH?—and, which is the heresy?—The "Lo here!" But that is a difficulty which our LORD did *not* entertain. It has very little existence in fact and experience. Every man, generally speaking, knows whether he is in "the Church." Though, of course, there is such a thing as a "strong delusion;" (2 Thess. ii. 11.) The whole of our LORD's address in this chapter is one which the Catholic Church *feels* the power of. It is full of "*difficulty*," and "uncertainty, and vagueness," to Sectarians only, who have no test whereby they can be sure that they are not the very persons aimed at by our LORD,

as following false and *new* teachers. It seems to me, that the Sectarian *cannot* act upon CHRIST's directions in this chapter. Nay they *must* have, to him, all the vagueness and uncertainty which he charges on the Catholic rule. "Keep to the ancient Apostolic way ; mind not novelties ; 'Go not after them.' Keep to the 'Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,' in opposition to every 'Lo here is Christ !'"

IV.

THE holy Apostle St. Paul, good children, in the tenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, writeth on this fashion : "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD, shall be saved. But how shall they call on Him on Whom they believe not ? How shall they believe on Him of Whom they have not heard ? How shall they hear without a preacher ? How shall they preach except they be Sent ?" By the which words St. Paul doth evidently declare unto us two lessons.

The first is, that it is necessary to our salvation to have Preachers and Ministers of God's most holy word, to instruct us in the true faith and knowledge.

The second is, that Preachers must not run to this high honour before they be called thereto, but they must be ordained and appointed to this office, and sent to us by God. For it is not possible to be saved, or to please God, without faith ; and no man can truly believe in God by his own wit, (for of ourselves we know not what we should believe) but we must needs hear God's word taught us by other.

Again, the Teachers, except they be called and Sent, cannot fruitfully teach. For the seed of God's word doth never bring forth fruit, unless the LORD of the harvest do give increase, and by His HOLY SPIRIT do work with the sower. But God doth not work with the preacher whom He hath not sent, as St. Paul saith.

. . . . Wherefore, good children, to the intent you may steadfastly believe all things which God by His ministers doth teach and promise unto you, and so be saved by your faith, learn diligently I pray you, by what words our LORD JESUS CHRIST gave this commission and commandment to His ministers, and rehearse them here, word for word, that so you may print them in your memories, and recite them the better when you come home. The words of CHRIST be these :

“ Our LORD JESUS breathed on His disciples and said, Receive the HOLY GHOST ; whose sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them ; and whose sins you reserve, they are reserved.”

. . . . Now, good children, that you may the better understand these words of our SAVIOUR CHRIST, you shall know that our LORD JESUS CHRIST, when He began to preach, He did call and choose His twelve Apostles ; and afterward, besides those twelve, He sent forth threescore and ten disciples, and gave them authority to preach the Gospel. And after CHRIST's ascension, the Apostles gave authority to other godly and holy men to minister God's word, and chiefly in those places where there were Christian men already, which lacked preachers, and the Apostles themselves could no longer abide with them : for the Apostles did walk abroad into divers parts of the world, and did study to plant the Gospel in many places. Wherefore where they found godly men, and meet to preach God's word, they laid they hands upon them, and gave them the HOLY GHOST, as they themselves received of CHRIST the same HOLY GHOST to execute this office.

And they that were so ordained, were indeed, and also were called the ministers of God as the Apostles themselves were, as Paul saith unto Timothy. And so the ministration of God's word (which our LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself did first institute) was derived from the Apostles, unto other after them, by imposition of hands and giving the HOLY GHOST, from the Apostles' time to our days. And this was the consecration, orders, and unction of the Apostles, whereby they, at the be-

ginning, made Bishops and Priests ; and this shall continue in the Church, even to the world's end.

Wherefore, good children, you shall give due reverence and honour to the Ministers of the Church, and shall not meanly or lightly esteem them in the execution of their office, but you shall take them for God's Ministers, and the Messengers of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. For CHRIST Himself saith in the Gospel, "He that heareth you, heareth ME ; and he that despiseth you, despiseth ME." Wherefore, good children, you shall steadfastly believe all those things, which such Ministers shall speak unto you from the mouth and by the commandment of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. And whatsoever They do to you, as when They BAPTIZE you, when They give you ABSOLUTION, and distribute to you the BODY and BLOOD of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, these you shall so esteem as if CHRIST Himself, in His own person, did speak and minister unto you. For CHRIST hath commanded His ministers to do this unto you, and He Himself (although you see Him not with your bodily eyes) is present with His ministers, and worketh by the HOLY GHOST in the administration of His Sacraments. And on the other side you shall take good heed and beware of false and privy preachers, which privily creep into cities, and preach in corners, having none authority, nor being called to this office. For CHRIST is not present with such preachers, and therefore doth not the HOLY GHOST work by their preaching ; but their word is without fruit or profit, and they do great hurt in commonwealths. For such as be not called of God, they, no doubt of it, do err, and sow abroad heresy and naughty doctrine.—CRANMER'S "Catechismus." Edit. 1548. *A Sermon of the authority of the Keys.*—See also *Jewel's Apology*, pp. 28, &c. Ed. 1829.

V.

THE arguments used in p. 87, 88, &c. respecting the Priesthood of CHRIST, still manifesting the One Sacrifice of CHRIST

in the Church, may serve incidentally to illustrate the error of the Romanists respecting both the Priesthood and the Sacrifice. St. Paul certainly implies that an *analogy* exists between the Ministers and their functions in the respective Churches of the Jews and Christians. And in implying an *analogy*, he evidently takes for granted that there is not an *identity*. The Romanist seems to overlook this: his error is truly a Judaizing error; and it seems to result from a virtual forgetfulness, that the *ONE* great Sacrifice "once for all" *has been* offered, and that the Christian Priesthood has only continuously to "manifest" it. In speaking of the "Priesthood" of the Church, and the Eucharistic "Sacrifice," we certainly imply that the Christian Presbyter has truly holy functions to perform, in respect of the great atoning Sacrifice, *analogous* to those of the Jewish priest: but we must be careful not to make them *identical*. St. Paul, in the epistle to the Hebrews, evidently assumes the analogy, but his argument is wholly inconsistent with the notion of identity. The Christian Priest cannot "sacrifice," in a Jewish sense of the word; but in a much better. So it may be truly said, that he has to "offer" continually The Sacrifice once made by The DIVINE HIGH PRIEST. (Gal. iii. 1.) But the term "offering," among primitive writers, is used *generally*; and does not exclusively refer to the Consecrated Elements alone.—See note E. in the former series of "Parochial Lectures," on the Holy Catholic Church. There is some historical light thrown on our own Church's view of this subject by the volume just published by the Principal of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, comparing the two Liturgies of King Edward VI.—Oxford, 1838.



THE END.

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Review Series

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

PAROCHIAL LECTURES.

(THIRD SERIES.)

WITH A

PRELIMINARY ESSAY ON THE TEACHING AND
PRIESTLY OFFICES.

BY

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“Τὸς παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων καθ’ ἐκάστην συνόδον ἄχρι τῆ νῦν
ἐκτεθέντας κανόνας κρατεῖν ἐδικαιώσαμεν” Conc. Chalced. C. I.

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SANCTISSIMÆ MATRI
ECCLESIAE
ANGLICANÆ CATHOLICÆ.

PREFACE.

THESE Lectures were written, and are now published, with an earnest belief that a restoration in our Church of the "Parochial System," truly so called, is not yet to be despaired of. Whatever more general topics, connected with so extensive a subject as the Jurisdiction of the Hierarchy set up by CHRIST on earth, have been introduced into these discourses, all have been made subsidiary to this one practical and pressing object, the development of the Christian idea of a Parish, and the position of the Parish in the Catholic system.

That holy tie which exists between the Parishioner and the Parish Priest has, indeed, come to be thought coldly of, as an almost secular connexion. Scarcely any sacred and grateful feelings are ever in our days awakened by those once venerated names. And is there not

a cause? Are we not gradually subsiding lower and lower, as to all those views and practices which once distinguished our Church from the Sects (in the popular eye, at least)? And does not any modern extension of our system seem to be generally an enlargement, or subdivision of our "machinery," rather than a revival of our spiritual life within us? Let us ask ourselves what we really mean. Do we intend our ancient forms and phrases gradually to die out, disappear, and be superseded by a parliamentary educational system, divided all over our land? It were a more manly course than that, to disavow the past, and draw the line, and begin anew.

These Lectures on Jurisdiction, it hardly needs be said, do not pretend to be a formal Treatise. They are designed to bring the subject of which they speak as intelligibly and simply as possible before the mind of general readers. The former two series of Lectures—"On the Holy Catholic Church," and "On the Apostolical Succession,"—are introductory to these; and, taken altogether, they may form a popular summary, or synopsis, of those religious controversies which now occupy the attention of us all.

The preliminary Essay prefixed to the third series of Lectures seemed required to give a completeness to the view of our Catholic System. Some of the plainer and more popular parts of these Lectures were preached in Advent last, on the Wednesday evenings. It had been intended that they should be accompanied by more copious notes, and a third Appendix as to the guidance which Priests among us may derive, in the performance of their more sacred duties, from the works of some holy predecessors in the “ministry which we have received,” who felt with the blessed Apostle, “who is sufficient for these things?” —But this must be postponed.

MAY these pages, as now sent forth, have HIS blessing, Who alone can “revive our work in the midst of the years !”

Whit Monday, 1847.

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AN ESSAY

ON THE

TEACHING AND PRIESTLY OFFICES OF THE CHURCH.

1. §. *What the Apostolical Succession implies.*

THERE was something astonishing at first, to the religious mind, in the hostility with which the doctrine of the Apostolical Succession was encountered, on its re-assertion and revival among us a few years since. It seemed as though the present age could endure nothing so ill as the approach of Divine authority; for it was the idea itself that was recoiled from, and not the evidence that had been examined and rejected as insufficient. Apostolic scriptures, men had come in some sort to acquiesce in: they could be criticized, and “interpreted.” Apostles themselves, many still thought, might be admitted and believed in with no great danger; so long as the space of eighteen hundred years were interposed between them and us. But a “Succession,” sacredly extending from the chosen Twelve, from age to age unbroken—still personating them, uttering their voices* and occupying their “thrones,” this was a thought full of fear to a gene-

* Tertulian, *Prescrip.* adv. Her. c. 36.

ration whose instincts spoke plainly, "depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways"; and rather than admit it, clamour was raised to the loudest, and professing Christians joined themselves to the least taught or semi-heathenish portion of the people, and "furiously raged together"; while a not less determined, though quieter, few hoped that they might be able to seek out every Judas of every apostolic line, and, by his history and his fall, confront and discredit the "eleven."

A thorough earnestness about the things of eternity, a determination to "count all things but loss," that we may "win CHRIST and be found in Him," is that which alone will qualify any man to begin to take part in that divine controversy, which in this latter age is to be carried on between CHRIST and Antichrist. He who enters on it without this, however bold a combatant, will not be "on the LORD's side."

From the very first, indeed, there was that in the aspect of our religion which alarmed the world, at the prospect of "interference." Herod and all Jerusalem with him, were "troubled" at the new-born KING of the Jews. Nor could His apostles avoid the odium of "preaching another KING, one JESUS," and the suspicion that they would "turn the world upside down." The setting up of a Sacred Hierarchy was felt to be no insignificant work. The world knew, at once, that it had a life and death interest in opposing it. So has it ever been; so is it now. It was as impossible in our time, as of old, to believe that so vast a claim as that involved in the doctrine of the "Apostolic Succession" could be made without really implying more than appeared on the surface. This was felt on all hands. If the Christian Minister, when constituted

such, was to be no more than a religious and educated expounder of Christian truth, and leader of public worship, then the means, or process of his becoming so, needed not to be in form so elaborate, and so liable to grave misinterpretation. Why should a holy line, apparently, have been drawn out from age to age in the manner alleged, when every end and purpose of "edification," as thus supposed or understood, might and often would be attained without it, by care and education?—How frequently has this been felt in controversy between uncatholic Churchmen, and those whom they truly call their "dissenting brethren." The latter, in truth, do without the Succession, what the former do with it; and are often indeed more able, intelligent, and effective instructors than their "episcopal" friends, who attempt to imitate them. Uncatholic episcopalians say, that they acknowledge the succession as a matter of history not to be denied by the well informed; but they deduce no consequences from the fact. This is unreal; and their unepiscopal brethren feel this. Some of them would go on intrepidly questioning the fact: others regard it as an accident of the Church's history at best: and all agree in the hollowness of making much of it, in a purely spiritual religion like ours. At all events, when such "superstitious" value was attached to this "form" of appointing a Clergy, was it not the plain duty of those who agreed in "fundamentals" to unite in disclaiming all supernatural pretensions for this succession?

Therefore an outcry was raised: and another party joined in making it, before long. Political and literary men of the world were, at the beginning of the Church's revival, uncertain whether to applaud or censure. They saw that it was not (what they had

learned to abhor as the type of religiousness in the last age,) "evangelical"; and so they half congratulated themselves on what they hoped might be an effort of anti-sectarian zeal in the Church. But as the revival began to be more and more known, and seen to be religious, as well as active, the world, true to its own instincts, took part in the outcry against these "pretensions." The generality of the worldly following their leaders, had a shrewd perception, that the Apostolical Succession would never have been thought worth reviving, with so much anxiety, unless it contained some hidden power. The cry of priesthood, and "priestcraft" was already raised; and they had but to join. And so, for different reasons, uncatholic Churchmen, sectarians, worldlings, and infidels, unanimously joined in the cry.

There was reason then in that outcry. The more the revived doctrine was discussed, the more clearly did the common sense of all men see that it never could mean a matter of "form," a "question of order" only. If that were indeed its meaning, it deserved to be scouted as a mischievous invention to divide brethren—a most dangerous and irreligious assumption, against which the hardest things ever said are lighter than it deserves. It is a claim of the supernatural; or it is nothing. It does mean, beyond doubt, much that the world calls priestcraft; and that the Church reveres as priesthood. Why should so plain a fact be varnished over? If any Churchmen there be who really think the episcopal succession a "mere form," and that "mere forms" are not binding or necessary under the Gospel dispensation—why have they kept up this form when they know how fearfully it has been "misinterpreted"? There was

no need of insisting (as our Church did and does) on all Presbyterian ministers submitting to episcopal ordination, if they come among us. [Cardwell's Conf. p. 378.] Surely if "order and regularity," be all that is to be attained, the Presbyterian mode of appointing their teachers is at least equal to most of our ordinations; and would not charity itself have suggested that the old system, which experience had shown to be liable to such pernicious mistakes, should long since have been deliberately broken up? Would not charity itself demand that these words,—“Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a PRIEST in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained, &c.,”—be *omitted* at the future ordinations of the Clergy? Who, at least, are henceforth to be blamed; they who, after this, shall believe in a Priesthood among us? or they who say that we claim no Priesthood, and that these words are a “form”? Is it a mere wish to impose on the imagination of the vulgar that influences the Episcopalians of the nineteenth century, as well as the Elizabethan politicians of the sixteenth, in keeping up a Catholic “form,” while “denying its power”?

God forbid, that one word here said, should have the effect of driving uncatholic minds into sinful extremities, more consistent with their theories than is their present practice! Would that the better sort of Puritans among us, might be led hereby to see the real meaning of their principles! Would that they would learn to look with suspicion at the sort of company, whose ranks they are swelling against us, while rejecting the doctrine and office of Priesthood! Who

sees not, that the great object of terror to all wicked men, is what they revile as "Priestcraft"? If there be one word which infidels hate more than any other, it is "Priesthood."¹ They are wise in their generation, and see well enough, that if they would root out Christianity, they must destroy its Priests. Ought it not to raise doubt in any truth-seeking mind, to find itself on the same side with the open defamers of all religion? Undeniable it surely is, that the philosophical and political infidel, the reckless ill liver, and all the world's virulent host of persecutors, down to the retailer of irreligious wit, are ready to equal the stanchest Puritan in zeal, "not to be priestridden." If such are content with the side they have chosen, the Catholic Churchman, at least, may be content with his, while he "fears the LORD, and reverences His Priests." Our LORD and Head Himself, was and is, a "Priest for ever"; and they who in their Priesthood, know no other aim, nor blessedness, than faithfully to represent Him, and say, "as He was, so are we in this world," may well rejoice to bear the scorn of the Priestly name CHRIST bears!—rejoice if thus "accounted worthy to suffer shame for His Name!"

In professing to have "the Succession" from the Apostles, far from us then be the thought, that we are maintaining a mere form, or a point of order; far from us all shrinking from *whatever* it really means. And that there may be no mistake of our meaning, let us attempt to state it fully and fairly. It has not been unusual with many, to express the doctrine of the Succession, in such wide and general terms, that at the most, a vague impression, 'that this is the Church's way of making, or rather inheriting, a

¹ See the late work of the miserable M. Michelet.

Ministry,' is all that is conveyed. Let us aim to express ourselves more distinctly.

The doctrine is primarily founded on such texts as the following: "Even CHRIST glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art a Priest for ever." "As my Father sent me, *even so* have I sent you." "A man can receive nothing, except it be *given him* from above." "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should *remain*." "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." "Lo, I am with you always, *even to the end* of the world." "I will not leave you orphans; I will come unto you." "I will send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, that HE may *abide with you for ever*." It is unnecessary to enter here into the proof and formal developement of this doctrine.¹ Our object now, is not to defend the Succession of the ministry, but to say what we *mean*, and so explain the nature of the Ministry itself. It was given by the LORD to be as His "embassy" to the world—to supply His place as His Representative—and that so perfectly, that His people should in no respect be "left orphans" at His departure. His personal absence was to be supplied so fully, that the Church should not suffer loss.

Now if CHRIST has thus sent His Ministers, "as His FATHER sent Him," let us reflect on the nature of our LORD's own mission, and then we shall learn the mission of His Church to mankind. That CHRIST intended to *continue*, what He came to impart to our world, none can doubt. His own declarations are express;—they reach to the close of this dispensation. As far as we know, He first personally appointed no other means

¹ See more fully "Lectures on the Succession," Second Series:

for continuing His Revelation than His Church, containing, as it does, His Sacraments and His Word. Whatever CHRIST came to give, His Church was appointed to continue.

We are all familiar with the saying that CHRIST came as the "Prophet, Priest, and King" of His people. Perhaps, however, we are apt to think that these "three offices" of our LORD, as they are termed, are only metaphorically ascribed to Him; so that we call Him "our King," for example, at one time, just as we call Him our "Shepherd," or our "Rock," or our "Refuge," at another. Of course, if these three offices of Messiah fully comprehend a true account and explanation of what He is to His redeemed, there can be no more superficial mistake than to regard them as accidental "figures" only. Now a very little reflection will evince that this comprehensive representation is founded on the literal facts of His mission; and is not a mere illustration of certain points of His character. —Fulfilling the predictions of foregone ages, Messiah came to be to His Jerusalem, His Church, all that holiest priests, or noblest prophets, or highest kings had been in their days; and more. It was not that there would be certain traits of the prophetic, priestly, and royal characters in Him; but, as will be hereafter pointed out, that He would fill to all future generations the place heretofore occupied by the whole series of prophets, priests, and kings, and so abide the "Head over all things to His Church." Henceforth in CHRIST was treasured up the abiding Teaching, the abiding Intercession, the abiding Government of His Saints. The modern idea of these three offices of CHRIST reduces us to this: He is called a Prophet, because He uttered predictions; a Priest, because He gave His life a sacrifice;

a King, because He commands us to obey God's holy laws: which loses sight of the truth that He is "THE Prophet like unto *Moses*;" (who was the Teacher and Lawgiver, more than Predicter;) the "Priest, after the order of Melchisedec;" and the King, born to His throne, and marshalling around Him His vicegerents, "appointing unto them a kingdom, as His FATHER had appointed Him." The modern doctrine hardly goes beyond saying that CHRIST was very like an ancient Prophet; very like a Priest; and resembled a King. The Church believes that CHRIST is in reality all these; and that too by a higher right, and in a more abiding, spiritual and glorious way. And why, (let it be asked,) should the Redeemer, the Second Adam, have thus come to us, as our Prophet, Priest, and King? Or rather, be it inquired, would any thing less have sufficed for our needs? Needed we not to be instructed when in ignorance of the will of our God?—to be reconciled to Him, when "far off" by sin?—to be guided, lest we again should fall? To Teach us, therefore; to make Reconciliation for us; and to subject us to His heavenly Guidance; this was the mission of Messiah. In our deep fall in Adam, our whole nature had suffered—intellectually, morally, and socially; and it was the work of the Second Adam to raise up again our whole nature—inform, and cleanse, and rule it for Himself.

If the "Apostolic SUCCESSION" in the Church would represent CHRIST faithfully, it must represent Him in all these offices. Before we can rightly understand, however, the office of the Church in Governing Christian souls, for and in the name of CHRIST; we must truly apprehend how the Teaching and Sacerdotal offices are first fulfilled.

2. §. *The PROPHETICAL Office of CHRIST in His Church.*

There is no difficulty in perceiving the nature of our LORD's own Prophetical character ; He was "like unto Moses." God had commissioned Moses to make known His dealings with our world, from the Creation, to the coming of the promised Deliverer, the Seed of the Woman ; to give His Law to a chosen people ; and set in order His Worship. The Prophet "like unto Moses," would therefore be the organ of God's Revelation from the New Creation onward to another advent ; the giver of a new Law, and in the end, the setter up of that "true Tabernacle which the LORD should pitch, and not man." The question then, between the Church and the world, whether religious, or irreligious, is simply this :—Did that Prophetical office of CHRIST cease, and die with Him on Calvary ? Or did it live on, by virtue of His promise, "Lo, I am with you," and "it is not you that speaketh," and "the Paraclete shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you," and "go teach all nations whatsoever I have commanded you" ?

The orthodox believe that the Teaching of CHRIST in His Church by His Word and Spirit, is as surely His, as when it came direct from His lips. If it were not so, then they of old who had inspired and living prophets were better off than we. Had CHRIST taken no means certainly to perpetuate His teaching ; had He not provided that "the sound should go forth into all lands, and the words to the end of the world," then would men, deprived of former prophets, have been left to a dreary guess-work in Religion. Withdraw from the Church the Prophetical, or Teaching, office of CHRIST,

and there is "no rest for the souls" of men. "Learn of Me," said the SAVIOUR, "and ye shall find rest." We dare not for a moment think that His voice has ever been withdrawn; or that He loved that generation who saw Him in the flesh better than He loves us. Yet, unless His prophetic office be extinct on earth, His Teaching authoritative and sure, unknown among men, and as much departed as the old line of prophets, it is to be found in His Visible Catholic Church alone. All besides are mysteriously restrained from even pretending to it. Either practical Christianity is altogether a fearful uncertainty, or it is the result of CHRIST's abiding presence in our midst.

This then we hold as certain truth: that CHRIST is our abiding Teacher; that His Gospel is a LAW; that our liberty in Him is but a childlike OBEDIENCE to Him. "Ye called me Master (*διδασκαλος*) and Lord," said CHRIST to His immediate followers, "and ye say well, for so I am." And such therefore, instrumentally, is His Church; led into all truth, and blessed with all peace, in Him her Head.—Now, when we reflect on the infinite doubts and distractions of the human mind when left to teach itself, surely few would question that a present and authoritative, heaven-sent Teacher, is exactly the *need* of all men. Few, at least, could have sympathy, and it were vain to argue, with those who should desire rather to be without so Divine an aid! As to all who doubt whether so precious a blessing were not too much to be expected in this world, surely it is, or should be, enough to remind them, that CHRIST Himself *was* such, when on earth; and in departing, promised not to leave His people "orphans," but guide them still, and fulfil the promise amidst all afflictions that might come, "The LORD will not remove thy

Teachers any more ; thine eyes shall see thy Teachers."

In saying thus, that CHRIST is ever our Teacher, and exercises that office for His people in and through His Church, it has however been replied, that we are using ambiguous, if not contradictory language. Let this be considered, therefore ; for the ends of truth can be promoted by no ambiguity.

1. It is alleged, that there is ambiguity in our speaking of the Church as the Teacher, while the Church consists of the multitude of those who are *to be taught*. Are we thus to make the Church at once the instructor and the learner ? Is it not, indeed, assigning to the Church on the one hand, a grace and wisdom, which, on the other, it denies ? Here, the Church in all her members, diffusively, is supposed to need instruction, and then appealed to, to *give* it in CHRIST's name, as His voice to the world !—In reply to which, it may first be observed, that this way of speaking is not peculiar to us. It is found in Scripture itself ; which (whatever be the meaning) speaks at times of the Church as needing more and more "edification," and at other times, as already having, and imparting, all "heavenly blessings in CHRIST JESUS." St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, says, the Church is "CHRIST's Body : " yea, "the fulness of Him, that filleth all in all." Might not disputers as well inquire how the Church, which possesses this Divine "fulness" of grace could be prayed for, elsewhere, that it might be "enriched with the knowledge of CHRIST" still further ?—It is said in one place that the Church is the "Pillar and Ground of the Truth ;" in another, he that prophesieth, is said to "*edify* the Church."—St. Paul praises some who were "followers of the Churches of God." St. John in the

Apocalypse warns Churches for falling away from their "first love" of CHRIST.—Rather than blame Scripture for "inconsistency" in speaking thus, as if the Church were our guide, and yet needed guidance itself; let us in more humility ask for the *meaning* of the inspired writers in all this.

Perhaps a somewhat parallel case may help our thoughts.—Suppose we were to say that any one's body has a vital power and energy imparted to it, which it puts forth to serve the purposes of its being; might we not add, without any inconsistency, that the members of the body are often languid and enfeebled? In what animal life consists, and how it is sustained, who shall decide? Yet it is no inconsistency to say that "we are weak," and also that we have a fountain of strength and "vitality" mysteriously within us, by God's gift.—Or again, to take a different example: There is no inconsistency surely, in saying that in things intellectual, our judgment is, and must be, our guide; and yet, that it often needs informing and strengthening, yea, must often *strengthen itself*.—Or, that our conscience is a guide in morals, from which indeed, there is no appeal; and yet that conscience needs continual instruction. It teaches, and yet is taught—teaches us, and mysteriously teaches itself—guides, and is guided—enlightens, and is itself enlightened. The analysis of all these illustrations seems to be this: wherever there exists vitality, without infinite perfection and power, we are obliged to use this double language in speaking of it. Life is exerted in respect of the body in which it resides; and its own action re-acts on itself, mysteriously, as God's imparted gift. It is so in all the works of God. It is so in His Church which is the "habitation of God, through the

Spirit." The Church, throughout her uncounted members, some of them more, some less, healthy and active, is thrilled by the Vitality that is in her, "stirs up her gifts" of life, and evermore, by the energy of immortal grace, is as if the impartor to her members of the blessing she herself receives. She teaches, and is taught : she blesses, and is blest.

2. There is another ambiguity of a yet more subtle and dangerous kind charged on our saying that the Church teaches for CHRIST, as His representative or "ambassador." CHRIST, we are reminded, was personally "infallible." Do we mean to affirm that the Church is equally so?—Now in replying to this, it will be far from difficult to show that all the ambiguity is on the side of the objector, and not on ours. It is superfluous to say, what no Christian ever disputed, that our LORD did not and could not err in any thing that He taught ; and yet it is very certain that He did not teach truth to all who heard Him, in such a way as to *prevent them from erring* respecting it. He was Incarnate Truth ; and yet He was often misunderstood by those who heard Him. So that the phrase "Infallible Teacher" has two meanings :—it means, one who himself errs not in the truth ;—or it might mean, one who so *teaches* others, that *they* err not. In the former sense, our LORD was an infallible Teacher, yea, the Truth itself : but we cannot use the words in the latter sense, even of Him ; knowing that many who heard Him did err from the truth, were not *taught*, but even rejected Him altogether. So, in a parallel way, no Catholic Christian doubts that the Truth of the Gospel shall be infallibly sustained in the Church unto the end. But in the second sense of the phrase, there is no infallibility in the Church as a *Teacher*.

Infalible *grace* indeed the Church doubts not of imparting to her abiding, faithful members: but infalible *teaching*, in the second, (which seems the Romish,) sense, every thoughtful man may perceive, requires as much infallibility in the receiver, as in the impartor of truth. Here then this much controverted matter may be thus summed up. That Divine Truth which our LORD infallibly possessed, He also promised that His Church should never lose. But neither He nor His Church would so supersede moral agency, as to convey with infalible accuracy to all, the formal knowledge of Divine things. Our reception, or "knowledge of the Truth" individually, is no infalible gift; it follows our moral fitness for it; it is various in degrees. "We know, but in part."

The practical question, then, at which we have to arrive is—how does the Church fulfil to her members the "Prophetical office" of her LORD? how bless them individually with that Truth as well as Grace which "came by JESUS CHRIST"? This should not be imperfectly apprehended. We say that the Church is a DIVINE INSTITUTE for the instruction of mankind; let us yet further explain this, and, if possible, satisfy objectors.

The Truths of the "world to come, of which we speak" are, when viewed relatively to our perceiving them, termed "the Faith." Thus the Apostle speaks of the "Faith once for all delivered to the Saints," and rejoices at the end of his course that he had kept "the Faith." This Faith of Christians comprehends all that CHRIST, proceeding from the FATHER, had taught definitely of the unseen world, and the way thereto, and the mysteries thereof. It is, as has been said, every way inconceivable that ALMIGHTY GOD should have taken no means for preserving in the world that Revelation which He had

made. It is certain He "committed it to faithful men." "The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels" by His SON. To say, that He left any power on earth to modify, by varying or essentially changing the Revelation of CHRIST is, by implication at least, to charge imperfection where few would dare openly to charge it. This however, is what the Romanist theory would practically lead to.—To say, that He left no power on earth to protect, guard, preserve and unfold the truth, but left it to itself to be received, continued, or not, complete, or not complete, as the case might be—this is the hopeless theory of modern Ultra-Protestants; which would leave every one to acquire, as well as he can, a knowledge of God's will, without pretending to say how much, or how little, erroneous that may be in every case. Alas, that any man should be found eager to rest his soul on a foundation so comfortless as this !

Indeed, the plain facts of the case, if we look at them steadily, are wholly inconsistent with both these theories. That truth which CHRIST committed to His disciples, they began to teach at the first Pentecost. True, indeed, what CHRIST had "spoken secretly in their ears, they proclaimed on the housetops." What He had spoken darkly, they proclaimed in the light. What He had taught in parables, they taught "with demonstration of the Spirit." But it was the *same* truth. The imparted Spirit "brought to remembrance whatsoever they had heard" of CHRIST. It cannot be proved that they added any thing: but yet they unfolded all. It is of course a mere question of fact; and as such, must be decided. Let the Romanist point out, if he can, a single case in which the Apostles added any thing to the "FAITH once delivered." We take our position on the matter of fact. If they object (as they well may) to our giving higher

attributes of power to the Primitive and Apostolic Church, than to the Church of later ages ; we at all events, have a right to see to it, that they do not attribute a higher power or function to the present living Church, than was exercised by the Church Apostolical. The Apostolic Epistles, written long after the lifetime of our LORD, contain no doctrine or teaching of any sort of which we may not find the essence and the germ in the personal teaching of our LORD Himself, in the Gospels. The Apostles preserved the received truth, or they expanded it, according to the circumstances of the time. Following the mind of the Spirit, they watched, they guarded, they acted on, what God had spoken to us by His SON. They allowed nothing to escape ; but we find not that they added any thing. If any man came with "another gospel," not consenting to "wholesome words, even the words of the LORD JESUS," they spoke anathemas on his head. The LORD had "counted them faithful, and put them into the ministry" ; and at the close of their course they had this simple, deep, and earnest rejoicing, that they in their time "had kept the Faith" ; and as they departed to their "crown laid up," "committed it" to their Successors, that they too should "Teach others also." Nor was this pure preservation of the Faith the result of individual Grace, or personal Gift, or ability, in the Apostles or Apostolic men : otherwise, what security should *we* have ? The Church was "the habitation of God through the Spirit" ; and that Spirit "withip her will not depart out of the mouth of her seed or seed's seed from this time forth, for ever."

The pretended difficulty of some, as to "what is the definition of the CHURCH ?" is no more worthy of being entertained by us in this place, than an inquiry as to the definition of "personal identity" would have to do

in a treatise on morals. That great Visible Institution which has been known to the world, and has mainly perpetuated its visible Christianity everywhere, can never be in any real danger from the inquiries of metaphysics. Granting that dogmatic Christianity lies wholly in the Scriptures; yet they have not in fact been received from the first, nor retained, apart from the Church.

The Church then, being from the first, the "Pillar and Ground of the Truth," even before that Truth was written in the New Testament Scriptures; and, after it was written, being "the witness and keeper of holy writ," (as our 20th Article testifies;) it is her solemn duty not merely to possess it, but to impart it. But, though the Church should impart it with all authority, has the individual Christian no responsibility in receiving it? Or, to use a modern phrase, is the right of private judgment to be set aside? and if so, what is, definitely, to take its place? This inquiry must not be for a moment evaded. It is disingenuous to pretend that it is a "difficulty" which belongs exclusively to Churchmen. It concerns all parties in this controversy. The Protestant need not pretend that private judgment is inconsistent with Church authority; nor the Romanist, that Church authority is incompatible with it.

That the Roman theory of Infallibility is but a verbal and technical way of shifting the difficulty by the aid of an ambiguous phrase, has been already pointed out (p. xxvi). But this, perhaps, is not enough. Consider, then, whether any intelligent being can be properly said to hold an opinion, without having *thought* of it? and whether to think without judgment, is a peculiarity which Roman Catholics would wish to claim?—Any how, if a man has any religion, he must have *thought*;

unless his convictions were obtained like the fanatic's, by private inspiration ; in which case, it would be neither the Bible, nor the Infallibility of the Church that was rested on, but the personal inspiration only. Let the case be put practically :—If a Romanist hear false doctrine from the public preacher, perhaps the Curé in his own Church, is he to receive it all ? If he hear the sometimes loose and popular teaching of a Bishop of Melipotamus, in England, or the semi-neology of a French Abbé, or the fabling superstition of some Neapolitan Priest, is he to receive all ? And yet, is not the least hesitation, the beginning of “private judgment !” even if that beginning lead no further than a conveying of the suspected teaching to some more trusted Teacher ? It is very well known that sensible Romanists *do* discriminate. They think about their religion, and think conscientiously : and what is that but “private judgment” ? Thus the right, the duty, nay, the inevitable necessity of private judgment, is recognised, and acted on in the Roman Church. And what more than this, do we in the English Church contend for ? Or what is there in this to interfere with the functions of the Church as our Teacher ? By what strange logic can a man conclude that a teacher can only really teach by forbidding his disciple to use his own mind ?—There is, indeed, on the other hand, equal unreasonableness in the common Protestant way of treating this point. It is concluded with an air of curious triumph, that if we have a right to think at all in Religion, that is quite enough, and we need no Church to teach us. Can any thing be less reasonable ? If the Romanist is like a master who should teach the rudiments of natural or scientific knowledge by cautioning him not to use his intellect in any degree, this kind of Protestant is like

one who not only should encourage a pupil to exercise his "private judgment" on the details of the grammar he is to learn, and the whole structure of the language he is to be taught, and submit to nothing which he cannot from the first comprehend and approve—but conclude by telling him, that no teacher at all is to be tolerated! Now no one can doubt what course in such a matter a wise parent would advise for a child. He would place him under a teacher, and tell him to listen, and try to understand; and believe him, in some things, even beyond what he can understand; and use his own understanding also to the utmost. Does it not seem even trifling, to have to elaborate so plain a point? Wherever God has implanted understanding and conscience, He will have them used; an account must be rendered for His gifts; but, neither can a sound understanding, nor a tender conscience to God-ward, be shown by rejecting the authority of a heaven-sent guide and teacher.

There is no inconsistency then in saying that men must use their private judgment and conscience; and yet that they are bound to make their moral and religious decisions in *one* way, viz: the right way; neither does it deprive our judgment of its proper freedom: as any parallel case would illustrate.—A man's mind and conscience ought freely to approve the laws of Morality. Nay, his actions are merely mechanical, and not really virtuous at all, (however void of blame) if his mind and conscience do not approve them. And yet, will any say that there is no limit to "private judgment" in morals? Every one sees that the pretence would be put down in an instant (if any made it,) to have "unlimited freedom of thought" here. We must have indeed a power of individual judgment, or we destroy all

moral agency ; and yet we must acknowledge a *limit* to this "freedom of judgment," or we destroy all fixed moral laws. God's definite laws of morals plainly *limit* man's less definite rights of conscience and judgment. No man, for example, is at liberty to say, that he is sincerely and conscientiously persuaded, that falsehood, uncleanness, or injustice are virtues. If moral freedom were unlimited, there could be no morality at all. —Why should it not be thus in REVELATION ? "He that believeth not, shall be damned," is a positive statement of CHRIST. It is not left for human private judgment to weigh this point "without any bias." It must weigh it, indeed ; but with the bias of the thought, that a sincere and conscientious mistake in this point, is still a mistake. No man is free to reject God's revelation, without incurring all the consequences. Why, those persons who, in justifying their departures from God's Church, claim freedom of conscience, unshackled, do not follow out their own principles ; for the Independents and Baptists do not think the Unitarian is at liberty to deny the Atonement, however "conscientiously" he may do it. Politically he is at liberty, but not in God's sight : not religiously. And the Unitarian would not think a man is at liberty to deny the whole Christian revelation, without incurring any peril. Unlimited private judgment is a mere fiction of an inaccurate thinker. There is no such thing in morals ; no such thing in society ; and there can be no such thing in religion. God's definite laws of REVELATION plainly limit man's less definite rights of private judgment and conscience ; so that in religion also, as truly as in morals, man must *use* his judgment and his conscience, but yet in *one* way only ; viz :—in subordination to God's fixed laws.

If what has now been said disposes of the common preliminary objections to the truth that the Church is our Teacher, we may proceed to the practical consideration of this, especially as involving the case of our own times, and our own Church: for general principles and general arguments, to be worth any thing, must be followed into their possible and actual results. Granting, it may be said, that in the Church, God has preserved, and ever will preserve His truth—yet how are individual Christians to obtain it? In other words, how can the Church Universal be the teacher, the imparter to every private Christian of that saving and essential truth which she possesses? Nor is this by any means so difficult a point as many seem to suppose.

Few persons consider how very extensively it is the sacred duty of all men to abide primarily in that state and position in which God has fixed them, and make the most of it, by acting for the best in it. It is plain that Almighty God has not given all men equal powers to comprehend the truth, even if it were placed close before their eyes: and yet all men have souls to be saved. So it is clear, that an equally perfect and exact comprehension of God's revealed will cannot be *necessary for salvation*. This at once makes a division of our question into two parts; 1st, how is *saving* Truth to be imparted by the Church to all her members, even the most ignorant? and 2nd, how are even the most highly privileged class of Christians to receive the teaching of the Church on points of dispute? The knowledge of saving truth is necessary for all to possess. The knowledge of intellectual or Doctrinal Truth, is necessary for those to whom God grants the opportunity and power of receiving it. The former may, and indeed does often *depend* on the latter, (and therefore it is

a solemn duty to contend for the "Faith once delivered to the Saints;") but the *reception* of the former does *not* necessarily depend on a knowledge of the latter.

Now as to the former, which is by far the largest part of the subject, the possession of SAVING Truth. There is a very remarkable practical agreement even among the most discordant parties. Thus Romanists say, that a sort of consciousness of infallibility in matters of salvation, is conveyed even in Baptism, to every faithful Christian, without any intellectual effort. And most Evangelical Protestants, especially of the school of Calvin, seem to teach that a consciousness of Divine favour is imparted in Conversion, or soon after; without the co-operation of what they call (when it pleases them) not private judgment, but, "carnal reason," and "man's wisdom." We in our Church dispose in a somewhat similar way of the case of the generality, the common run of Christians. We simply hold, as "generally necessary for salvation," the Sacraments of the Faith. In the case of adults these must be followed afterwards by that "holiness without which no man shall see the LORD." The abiding Sacraments are the Church's great witness to the Truth. There is, then, on all hands admitted, no hard case for the bulk of the Christian community, to whom our Sacraments are ever accessible, and holiness an intelligible duty, however mean the capacity. By these the Church herself teaches lessons of grace and wisdom which the most erring Clergy cannot erase from the minds of the people: and accurate thinking is required of few.

Then, as to the latter question,—How the better informed and more capable classes of Christians are to have Doctrinal Truths imparted by the Catholic Church? This is a question, the precise answer to

which must necessarily vary according to the countless varieties of capacity and opportunity. Very few indeed, are sufficiently well educated to be able to consult with advantage even the original Scriptures ; and fewer still have leisure. But in settling this question, be it observed, Roman Catholics have no advantage over ourselves. All must proceed in the same way, who would be *deeply* informed. All alike must use all the means and opportunities of knowledge in their power.

The case is somewhat simplified, in regard to the average of commonly educated persons, in these times, who *ought* to be satisfied that they have the Church's teaching on a disputed point. While we do not forbid, but encourage, all honest and thorough examination, we must remind men, that if the Church be (as CHRIST's promise warrants us in thinking) our Teacher, as in CHRIST's place, her practical teaching will be sufficiently evident, and if we may so express it, clear on the surface. True, CHRIST's own teaching was often obscure, and would bear solemn and arduous thought and search ; but its main drift was clear and plain to the hearer. So also must His representative's be. Nor can we suppose that Christians who would be well informed in their Religion are to be sent on a mission of inquiry all over the Catholic Church. Whatever truth and grace we attribute to the Church Catholic, the same we must (to be practical) in common cases attribute to each part thereof, or the Church Local ; the same *in kind*, though not in *degree*.

But further, it must be asked : How is an inquiring Christian in any part of the Universal Church to know the real teaching of that part of the Church ? He cannot always go on a journey of discovery through all the dioceses of his country.—Whatever, then, we

attribute to the Church Local, we must, (to be practical, and reach the case of the generality of common education,) attribute the same *in kind*, though, again, in a *less degree* to every PARISH PRIEST, as everywhere a local organ of the Church. Nor need it be feared that this rule is arrogant or impracticable. What is thus said is a mere matter of fact. We shall observe immediately, its limitations and safeguards. Common Christians may truly say "we cannot get at the sense of the Universal Church; we can, but with an effort, get at all the decisions of our *own* branch of it; and we commonly receive even our own Local Church's teaching, through her great Doctors, and even our own particular ministers." This must in some sense be truth; because the Spirit of CHRIST is the pervading life of the Church, (which is the Body of CHRIST,) which life is conducted to all its parts by appointed channels, and various vessels; main arteries being only here and there.

If this manifold plan be closely regarded, it will be found to be simple in action, though "fearfully and wonderfully made," in theory. On great and solemn occasions, of vital import, the whole Church has ever been accustomed to meet in Sacred Synods, and her decrees concerning the Faith have from time to time been embodied in Creeds. Such are the Three Creeds concerning which our Church says in her Article, "they must be received because they may surely be proved by warrant of Holy Scripture." So even the Church Catholic in General Council assembled, may not, and *cannot* decide any thing contrary to Scripture. Holy Scripture, then, is a limit on the power of the Catholic Church. She has power to define, power to explain, for our instruction, "authority in controversies of faith;" but no power to alter, or reverse previous truth.

So also, a Local, or National Church has power. She is to her people, if she is any thing, the channel of the vital Grace and Life of the One all-pervading Spirit. Yet a Local Church cannot, by her Synod, set aside either the doctrinal decisions of a General Council, or the letter of Scripture. What Romanists give to the now living Church, is but a perversion of a truth, viz : the right and claim of the Church representative, the Church *accessible*, *i. e.* the Church Local, to the obedience and submission of its members, for the time being, and in all ordinary cases. A Local Church embodies her decisions in her Canons, and Articles, and Laws—and they are, *pro tanto*, Catholic Truth to her children, if they do not oppose the decisions of the General Councils in the Three Creeds—or the decision of Scripture, which is higher than all.

We must thus attribute to a National Church, the same kind of power as to the Catholic Church ; though in a less degree : *i. e.*, a power of Teaching, and defining her teaching. This, practically, is done by Rome also. Therefore, (as will be seen) the General Council of Nice for the better ruling of the Christian Body, orders and appoints that Provincial Councils shall be held ; and their decisions have authority over the faithful in each province, (of course provided nothing be done contrary to Scripture, or the Œcumenical Synod.) Church Councils, for a long time after the Nicene, were accustomed to preface their sittings with a profession that they held to the decisions previously made by the 318 Fathers of the First General Council. In this wise, every Council of the whole Church was a limitation on all that came after. There remained less and less to define.

But there have been false Councils, both Provincial and General, which have been proved so by their trying to set aside *previous faith*. Thus, the Council of Con-

stance was a false Council, because it *professedly* set aside the previous truth of Scripture and all antiquity, that the Cup in the Lord's Supper was given to all the faithful. So the Deuteronicense was a false Council, because it set aside the previous judgment of both Fathers and Holy Scripture against Images in Churches. So also the Council of Ariminum was false, for it set aside the Nicene Creed, which was established on "sure warrant of Holy Scripture." So, be it remembered, our own Church, though she has power to teach and explain to us, as far as we are capable, God's truth, as it is in Jesus, has no power to overthrow the Three Creeds, or go against Scripture; and if she even attempted it, her people could not obey and follow her.

Lastly, every Local Priest must be the teacher of CHRIST's truth; he only is *accessible* to the people; but he teaches under a still further limitation. What he teaches by his own mind, has no kind of authority, if it goes against his own Church, speaking in her Liturgy and Articles, or if it goes against the Three Catholic Creeds, or if it goes against Scripture as so previously interpreted by his own Church, and by the Catholic Church in Council. Nay, if the Minister of the Church teaches any thing beyond what is settled by the letter of Scripture, the General Councils, and his own Prayer Book—any thing beyond this, whether good or bad, it can only be listened to with forbearance and respect: just as we should listen to any other man who had studied any subject, and was trying to explain it. In such a case, let Christians exercise private judgment. An honest Clergyman, if he bring forward such a matter at all, should seek no more than this. He should candidly say: 'this is a point not fixed in Scripture, nor in

the Prayer Book, and therefore is not taught by me as necessary to your salvation: consider what is said and decide accordingly.' On all vital points he is bound to appeal to the Prayer Book, the Creed, and the Bible. The Priest indeed, has often, on religious points, a better opportunity of forming a sound judgment than a layman in the same circumstances; and simply because he *is* the Priest, because he has special leisure, special advantages, and (it is his own fault if he has not also) special gifts of Grace. But still he is personally, a very fallible guide after all, except in official duty and Sacramental functions.

Of course, it is in vain that an officiating Priest preaches against Priesthood. The people may see that what their Minister teaches is Catholic Truth, the Faith of CHRIST, if he appeals not to his and their *feelings* only, which are ever variable, but to the plain unvarnished meaning of his Prayer Book, as the instructor of the people, provided by the Church herself. All other systems of analysis of this matter, are intricate and uncertain; but this is plain and straightforward. We say there is no certainty at all in any man who teaches "from himself." We say, trust no man, who, without the Church, asks to be a guide: believe no teacher who will not point to the Prayer Book as confirming his interpretation of the Bible. Putting it on the very lowest ground, there is no man, be his ability what it may, who is not far likelier to be wrong, than the *Church's* voice, speaking in the Prayer Book. But there is a higher ground, and, knowing that the Church is the Teacher of the people of God, we cannot doubt that her teaching must be practically efficient and true to her faithful and holy members; and that her teaching is *safe*, (though not on all points without imperfection,) in her

Book of Common Prayer, which she places in our hands.

Now in point of fact, the mass of Christians *do* thus receive their Religion. They are baptized, and confirmed, and so receive the first essentials of Religion through the Church ; and their minds are so far formed by the Prayer Book, that even erroneous teachers could not make any way with their systems if they did not pretend to be in keeping with that blessed book. Here then is the special place for private judgment : let us employ it well ; here we are responsible. Let us mark which Teacher endeavours to follow the Prayer Book ; and which does not think of referring to it unless sorely *pressed* to do it ; which does it naturally, and which *reluctantly*.

But, it is asked, is nothing due to the Minister's opinion?—We say 'nothing authoritative,' nothing till it is confirmed by the *Church*, and then it is shown to be part of "the Faith." "The Faith" was "delivered to the Saints," the Faith is preserved in their blessed company—that which is so preserved and committed to us we must teach ; but if we attempt to teach any thing beyond it, the people are not bound to follow. Deference, subordination, and respect, are due indeed to their Priest's opinion, because he is their Minister under CHRIST, and the centre of Unity ; but his mere opinions are binding on no man without examination. St. Paul, in exhorting the Hebrew Christians to obedience, did not command them to adopt every notion of their teachers but only the "faith" delivered to them. He said not "whose *opinions* follow ye ;" but "whose FAITH follow."

To conclude then, on this head, as to the Teaching office of the Church. The CHURCH's Teaching of God's

Infalible Truth preserved in her, comes to her members *universally* for salvation by the Sacraments, and lives in them "through righteousness into eternal life." —The Church's Teaching comes, in all questioned points, to her members through the Creeds; through Synodal Acts; and practically, through the Clergy, in such proportion as they employ the Church's own provided means. Nay, if in an uneducated age, or country, there were no generally diffused Prayer Book, the Universal Creed professed by every Christian at his Baptism, would be an efficient check on any fundamental wanderings of the Clergy: and the Grace of the Sacraments, with holiness afterwards, would ever save the souls of Christians.

If even very much darker times were to threaten the stability of the Faith, the experience of the past warrants our reliance on the Spirit's Grace in the Church vitally manifesting itself according to the necessity of the case. How true in fact is it, that men do get their Christianity from the Church, and not from books! In the position held by us we are in no wise worse off than the Primitive Churches of Apostolic founding. How, in point of fact, did the earliest generation of Christians receive their Religion? What amount of means did their heavenly Master leave them by which they might learn His Laws and keep the Faith?—It is computed that a generation of men dies off in about thirty years: How was Christianity taught during the thirty years following the ascension of CHRIST? The Gospels, even, were not written; the Epistles were not in existence. It is a mere matter of *fact*, that the Apostles and those also whom they sent forth in every direction to execute their high mission on the earth, taught personally and by word of mouth. They con-

ferred the baptismal grace, and taught the baptismal Creed ; the same in substance as what is called the "Apostles' Creed"; "and the LORD thus added unto the Church daily such as should be saved." If men had disputed the Church's authority to teach, they would have been disputing *every* thing ; for there was nothing else in those days to rely on. And we cannot find that CHRIST has ever superseded that authority. He has done nothing to lessen it. The truths of the Faith were the same before they were written as they are now ; the truths of Him Who is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." The Spirit which CHRIST gave to His Church did not breathe itself forth into the sacred volume after the first generation of Christians, and then leave the Church. There is no proof of this ; and who shall dare assume it, when it is written, that it shall not depart "out of the mouth of her seed's seed for ever" ?

Though, indeed, we have attributed no sanctity to the individual opinions of our Teachers, we feel and know, that the Truth divine, the essential Faith, when rightly spoken by the Priesthood, has a spirit and life, as received in the appointed channels of grace, which even the same truth would cease to have elsewhere : (just as the lifeblood of the body natural would coagulate and change, when taken from the vital vessels.) And further, *we* have even advantages beyond the primitive Christians, notwithstanding their miraculous gifts ; viz., a more *immediate* knowledge of the Church's mind—because so much is fixed now by her past decisions recorded in her Prayer Book. With us there is the fixed doctrine of eighteen hundred years.

We leave to the Romanist the hopeless and uncertain theory that the now living Church has power to

unsettle the past! Ours is a fixed and sure foundation ; the "Rock" of CHRIST that *cannot* be moved, but "abideth for ever." And is it not a consoling and sustaining thought, that we are taught by the APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION of that very Church which CHRIST set up? that we adhere to all her decisions and depart not, in intention, from her abiding laws? We are occupying the very place once occupied by Apostles, and those who saw the very followers of our LORD. Our only desire is to *follow* them; to unsettle nothing; to receive truths exactly as the first Christians did, with humble though inquiring minds; and so transmit to the coming age, the Truth of CHRIST and the Authority to Teach it.

3. §. *On the PRIESTLY Office of CHRIST in His Church.*

MANY who might be convinced of the continuance of an effective "teaching" in CHRIST's Church, will, however, reject with deepest repugnance, the notion of a true Priesthood abiding among us. Perhaps men feel their intellectual more than their moral needs. Certain it is, that a Priest in heaven is quite near enough for the many! With some this is to be accounted for by a determination not to be disturbed in sinful ways of life. With others, education and involuntary prejudice will explain it. A smaller class, and more to be respected, are wont to ground their opinion on what they deem Scripture evidence, *i. e.* (more strictly) what is called the *silence* of Scripture as to all PRIESTHOOD in CHRIST's Church.

Now, though in Holy Scripture, much more is both said, and plainly implied, concerning the Priesthood,

than most persons seem to observe, yet it were well to reflect, that precisely the same objection, which Puritans urge against the notion of CHRIST's continuing His Priesthood in His Church, the Socinians have been used to urge against the personal Priesthood and the real sacrifice of CHRIST Himself. This is a very solemn warning surely. Socinians and Arians have urged the silence of the New Testament as to CHRIST's own priesthood. Let not this surprise any one by the spiritual blindness it indicates : perhaps we ourselves have seemed spiritually blind also, to better and deeper taught Christians ! Note what the Socinians say. They dwell on the fact that the principal assertion of CHRIST's priesthood is in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which was not received, they urge, for several hundred years as part of the New Testament. And then our LORD Himself never alluded to His being a Priest ; nothing of the sort is to be found in the Gospels. He certainly was hailed as " the Prophet like unto Moses." He no doubt was " born King of the Jews " of David's royal line ; but is there a word of His being a Priest, even after He had laid down His life for us ? " It is evident our LORD sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning Priesthood." His forerunner, the Baptist, just gives a hint of the coming truth, " Behold the LAMB of GOD, Which taketh away the sins of the world." The hint is followed by almost unbroken silence on the subject of Priesthood, until His life was laid down for man. St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, preserve almost perfect silence. St. John alone, writing his Gospel sixty years after the Resurrection, gives slight intimations of the Priesthood in his record of our LORD's discourses—and these never in any instance in such distinct terms

as those in which the Prophetical and Kingly offices are recorded and recognised. It is no peculiarity then of the doctrine of the Church concerning her Priesthood, that Scripture is said to be silent; for the same thing is true of what all who pretend to orthodoxy at all must admit, the *personal Priesthood* of CHRIST.

It is not difficult for the eye of the faithful Christian to see why so little is said or hinted either of the personal Priesthood of CHRIST, in the Gospels; or of the continuance of that Priesthood, in the Epistles. The announcement, for instance, at the beginning of the Gospel, of CHRIST's having come as a Priest to offer His life for the sins of men, would have interfered with the fair and just probation of the Jews, and the divine counsels respecting them and us. So the spiritual perpetuation of that Priesthood also, was not likely to be dwelt on; being allied with all the standing remedies for Christians' *sins*; for Scripture has not dwelt so specially on the remedies of sin after Baptism. The Christian Churches were addressed as "saints," and exhorted thus to abide; so in the exhortatory epistles addressed to them, the remedial powers even of the Eucharist are not prominently insisted on. They are rather taken for granted. Nevertheless, much more than is heeded or thought of is revealed in Holy Scripture as to our abiding Priesthood, and as to that which is its living head and fount, the Priesthood of our LORD CHRIST Himself, which, notwithstanding the comparative silence of the Gospels, is the sole hope, the main stay of our fallen world. What is so revealed in God's Word has never been lost to His Church in any age; and whatever objections may seem further to lie against the orthodox doctrine,—(as to its interfering with other

Christian truths,) will disappear as the thoughtful inquirer advances.

A question has at times been raised, as to the divine or human Origin of the rite of Sacrifice, with the attendant institute of a Priesthood. Perhaps too much importance has been attached to this question. Most of the Fathers of the Church seem to have thought that the institution of sacrifice was in the first instance wholly human; and never commanded by God until the Israelites came out of Egypt, when He allowed and directed sacrifices to Himself, in order to prevent the people from falling back to idolatry. Mr. Davison, as quoted by his opponent, adduces St. Justin Martyr and St. Chrysostom, as holding this view. Irenæus has been alleged on the same side; * Origen, however, in the Homilies on Leviticus, seems to take it for granted that the *Divine* institution of sacrifices began *then* for the first time. Ephraem Syrus (according to the Latin version,) appears to do the same. And at a much later period, when the Theology of the Church had been scholastically digested, a doctor afterwards and still in universal repute, Aquinas, propounds almost the same opinion, adding, that “the Priesthood also was determined by human judgment to the first born, before the time of Moses.” Others have held,—and it is held by many good divines—that Sacrifice was divinely instituted from the beginning. Such a theory is encumbered with more difficulties to a thoughtful mind than appear at first sight. But the controversy need not, while kept within the Church, be deemed of any serious moment; since they who are most strenuous in asserting that the notion of sacrifice is a part of

* But the passage which I suppose he alluded to will bear another meaning, if taken in its connection. Lib. adv. Her. iv. 34.

natural religion everywhere existing, and springing from human nature itself, do not question that it was adopted by God into the divine system of Revelation, and under some modifications always allowed, and always pious and acceptable, if offered with a pious mind. It is certain that there is no religion without it. God adopted it and used it; and it was graciously permitted to shadow forth the mystery of the Atonement.

But in the midst of all the ancient Sacrifices and Priesthoods—there stands One, evidently distinct from the rest, the true, the *real* type of what was to come in the fulness of time—different, mysteriously different, from all the sacrifices and Priesthoods of the Patriarchs, the Law, or the Prophets. If others had been the offspring of natural religion following the indwelling instincts of the religious natural mind, this at least was not so. If others began without direct sanction from heaven, this did not. It was God's own mysterious act and deed. Those legal and patriarchal priests were made, says the Apostle, "without an oath," (*i. e.* without God's Name being specially invoked to create and authorise) but "this with an oath by Him, who said, the LORD *swore*, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Now be it observed, Oblation, Sacrifice and Benediction, are functions of the Priesthood of Melchisedec, as truly as (more truly than) of any other in the old world; and His is the Divine type of the Priesthood of CHRIST. It stands in the dim distance of prophecy, as a sign from heaven, (but little regarded !) a light in the firmament, far above the brightness of the ten thousand earthly fires that human zeal had lighted on all the altars of primeval piety.

Surely there is a mystery and importance about this type of our LORD—Melchisedec, which contrasts strangely with all our modern views and feelings respecting CHRIST's Priesthood, its position in our theoretical system, or its actual continuance in His Church. A prophecy so peculiar, a type so divine, though so dimly and silently revealed, ought scarcely to have been habitually overlooked in our modern systems, as, in fact, it has been : for might not our notions remain completely as they are, if all mention of Melchisedec were omitted from the Scriptures? Modern Christianity could do without it. But how are we justified in taking no notice of a typical prophecy so remarkable, and completing our theological systems without necessary reference to this? Whatever may be said of other types or figures, however other Priesthoods or sacrifices were originated, yet, (as we have said) of Melchisedec's there can be no doubt. It is God's own act and deed to set up THIS figure of the coming Priesthood. It seems introduced in the Book of Genesis, without any necessity, save the manifestation of the Divine Priesthood to come. In like manner, and for the same purpose, it is sung of in the prophetic Psalm. And why? Were there no figures of CHRIST's sacerdotal office, no types of His offering to His Father, the wondrous oblation and sacrifice for sin? Surely there were many such, and far more distinctly dwelt on than this, in both the law and the Prophets : yet, this is God's own given type above all others, consecrated for this one Divine end—the foreshadowing, in some of its characteristics, of the Priesthood of MESSIAH ; “The LORD sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.”

The Priests and Sacrifices of the Law prefigured

indeed the office and death of CHRIST, the Great Sin-bearer ; yet, when HE had come, His Apostle spoke in degrading terms of those "shadows of the good things to come." He referred to the sacrifices as "beggarly elements," and "carnal ordinances ;" having in them no "endless life ;" and to the Priests, as "men that died, who received tithes." Not so did the same Apostle speak of Melchisedec : not one disparaging word escapes him, but most lofty things are said, and more hinted ; and we are bidden to "consider how great this man was !" We have exactly reversed the advice of the inspired Apostle, in our modern divinity. We have thought of CHRIST, exclusively, as HE fulfilled the legal types, or the shadows of the natural law ; and not of CHRIST, as fulfilling also GOD's own chosen type. We have, in heart, been so Judaizing, that we have at most regarded our LORD, as accomplishing what the sacrifices of the Law foretold ; and forgotten what He also was to accomplish, after the pattern of a greater Priesthood than Levi's or Aaron's ! We have been content to look back, historically, to what our REDEEMER did *once for all*, (as also the Jews could historically look forward to it of old ;) but what he was to *remain* FOR EVER, after a higher Order than Aaron's, we have scarcely thought of ! Now the Apostle asks, "If perfection were by the legal (or the natural) Priesthood," what necessity was there that *another Priest* should arise, called, not after the Order of Levi, but Melchisedec ? What necessity of another type ? If the shadowing forth of the Great Victim "once for all" to be slain, were the sole object of the HOLY GHOST in the sacrificial types, surely there were Priesthoods, victims, and oblations enough to foreshadow all that blessed Truth

of the Gospel. There were burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, meat-offerings, drink-offerings, sin-offerings, the Scape Goat, the Paschal Lamb. What *more* was needed, to cause the DIVINE BEING to give a special type of His own ordering, from fulfilling which he "hath sworn" he will not turn or "repent"? And seeing that so little *is* said, after all, of this type, given by God Himself—seeing that Scripture has wrapt so wonderful a veil of silence around this most important being, Melchisedec, does it not seem unaccountable that the Psalmist should have singled out this mysterious being, as the Divine idea of the Priesthood of MESSIAH, saying, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec;" and that an Apostle should have descanted upon it in guarded yet lofty words, for half an Epistle?

In these days, if men think of Melchisedec as a type of CHRIST at all, they do so only in a vague uncertain way, forgetting all the peculiar nature and details of the *type*; its distinction from all others; and confounding it with the types of the Law, which Scripture does not. It is true, that all the types and prophecies meet in CHRIST, but they do not all illustrate the same parts of His Mediatorial Work. How, then, may we omit any? or *this* above all, which was appointed specially by God? Or how presume to say, as some coolly have said, that God set up Melchisedec, recorded his history in the Pentateuch, announced its meaning with that God-like Oath in the Psalms, alluded to his offering (as we shall see) in the Prophecy, and commanded His Apostle to dilate upon it at such solemn length in a mystical Epistle; and all this, to inform us that CHRIST would pray, or intercede, *in Heaven* for the acceptance of His people!—If HIS being a "Priest

after the Order of Melchisedec," was what men were to look for *at His coming* to redeem our world, it seems strange piety to teach that this prophecy was only to be fulfilled by His praying for us *after He would have left* our world? To what end was the prophecy given? In what does the type answer to the antitype? CHRIST, indeed, carries our nature with Him into Heaven, and enters the Holy of Holies, in the presence of GOD, for us; but, in so doing, He is fulfilling, and surpassing, the *legal* High Priest's pattern, who personally so "entered the Holiest of all" in the Temple, with blood of sacrifices. But this, surely, is not the fulfilment of the type of Melchisedec. Melchisedec pleaded not in Heaven, nor in any typical Heaven, for others (as far as we know), even if he were so an intercessor; and shed not blood in his Sacrifice, so far as we are told. In what respect then, and how, has CHRIST, in His Incarnation, fulfilled that purpose, which, of all others, JEHOVAH swears and will not repent of, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec?"

To answer this solemn question, we must observe, in what respect the type of Melchisedec exceeded, varied from, or added to, what the types of the Law had taught. Now the Sacrifices under the Law of Nature, or of Moses, "could never take away sin"—could confer no positive blessing on the worshipper—or "make him perfect as pertained to the conscience." In other words, (says Aquinas) they wrought no *interior cleansing*. The Aaronic Priesthood was indeed appointed to "bless," in the name of the LORD: but this was not a necessary part of their sacrificial duty, but was separately bestowed on them (Numbers vi. 23). Their Sacrifices *prefigured* blessing, but did not

contain it. Again ; the Sacrifices of the Law were made by the shedding of blood of bulls and goats continually. Their Priesthood was continued by natural generation, from father to son, "after the Law of a carnal commandment ;" and one dark prophecy, at least, hinted, that their daily sacrifice would at length be taken away. Now, in all these respects, the type of Melchisedec varies from the Aaronic type. It points to a Priesthood, not corporeally inherited from father and mother ; "without father, without mother," it is said, having "neither beginning of days from man," nor "end of life" with man. It points to a Priesthood which had a blessing *in it*, a sacrifice *containing* grace, not figuring it only. Nay, its history guides our thoughts, by a reference not to be mistaken, to even the details of the LORD'S Eucharistic Sacrifice ever in His Church.

In the brief record of Melchisedec, (in Genesis xiv.) he is represented as first of all bringing forth "bread and wine." Bearing no other offering, than this bloodless one in his hands, he blesses Abraham, and blesses, or praises with thanks, the Most High God. This is the type. Melchisedec is Priest of the Most High God ; and this is his figurative Sacrifice : none other is alluded to.—Go forward in thought near 2000 years, and behold OUR Melchisedec, the LORD CHRIST, "taking bread and wine," looking up to God, and blessing it, and giving it to His Disciples, and saying, "This is My Body ;" and see there the fulfilment *beginning*, of the LORD'S Oath, "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec !" Our Heavenly High Priest had not a father or mother of the line of the Priests under the Law. His oblation of bread and wine ; the sacrifice implied in it ; the benediction conveyed by it, were all "after the order of

Melchisedec." What He was to do, in fulfilment of the Aaronic types, was to offer His life, Himself, on the Altar of the Cross, for our sins. What He now did, in fulfilment of the Melchisedec type, was to give Himself to His people, as well as to His Heavenly FATHER. His Body was offered naturally on Calvary. The same was done mystically in "the upper chamber," and beforehand, with His twelve Disciples! He was put to death by the Jews; the sword pierced His Holy side, "once for all," and "He dieth no more." His Flesh and Blood, under their natural forms, seated our humanity at the right hand of God, in union with the second person of the ever Blessed Trinity; and from thence He shall come, in His natural human form, "to judge the quick and dead;" yet it is His Flesh and Blood sacramentally present, under the forms of bread and wine, offered in His Church, by His Priesthood, "which ever hath an endless life." What was done by the Jews' instrumentality, and by CHRIST's own personal laying down His life, was done *once for all*, and fulfilled the Aaronic type. What was done in the Priesthood of Melchisedec, "abideth continually."—We repudiate the doctrine taught in the Roman Communion, and expressed by Bellarmine thus, in reference to the Eucharist; "a true and real sacrifice requires a true and real *death*, or destruction of the thing sacrificed"!* God forbid that such a thought should be entertained by us for a moment! The destruction or death of our Adorable Victim was "once for all." The *offering* of that Blessed Eucharist, is what "abideth continually." "We have no victim to slay"; we have to plead, with our Father above, CHRIST's sacrifice once made; a sacrifice not for ourselves alone, for that would imply

* De Missa, l. i., c. 27.

a kind of repetition to each individual; but the same sacrifice for all the Church of CHRIST—His True Body spiritually given for His Mystical Body—for its incorporation and sanctification, and union with Himself, by one perpetual exercise of His Divine Power. This is the doctrine of Sacrifice ever held in the Church of God.

In reply to the Roman notion, that CHRIST dies in the Sacrament of the Altar, not all the ingenuity of their most learned and acute doctors can clear it of the objection that, in that case, there is a continual repetition of His Death; and, also, that His Holy Body would thus be said to be dead on His earthly Altar, and live at God's right hand at the same time; which seems both a contradiction, and a profanity, to say. This is made more convincing by the fact, that the Institution of the Holy Sacrament, in which CHRIST said, "This is My Body," took place while His Body was as yet *unslain*, the night before His Crucifixion. And so, long after, the Apostle in the Apocalypse, when admitted to "see the visions of God," saw the Lamb in the midst and before the throne, looking "as it *had* been slain," but then "alive for evermore."

The Roman doctors seem to have been driven to adopt their dreadful conclusion, by carrying out the analogy of the old carnal sacrifices, according to which, it was not possible to feed on the victim while it was yet *alive*: on which a few words should be said. There is hardly any more difficulty, surely, to either sense or faith, in saying that it is CHRIST's Body living, than His Body slain, on which we feed in the blessed Sacrament. We can no more understand the one than the other; in addition to which, HE Himself said "The word He had spoken was *spirit and life*." Surely, He "liveth in us" when we "feed on Him."

But, in truth, as St. Thomas Aquinas has confessed, the sacrifices of the Law were *not* commonly afterwards given for the eating of the people; and this was one reason for the institution of the Melchisedec type of "bread and wine," viz. that it might be eaten. The Passover sacrifice is indeed the one instance in which the victim was eaten afterwards by all the people; and this, though no part of the Levitical, or Aaronic ritual, for it preceded it, yet is, by St. Paul himself, called a type of CHRIST's Passion. But, the Apostle does not say to the Corinthians, "Let us slay our Passover, even CHRIST, and then keep the feast;" but "CHRIST, our Passover, is sacrificed for us, therefore, let us keep the feast." They had it present to feast on spiritually; and not to slay. The notion of a slaying being required, is inconsistent too with the statement of the best doctors, that the sacrifices of the ancients, though they were types of CHRIST's expiation, "were *not* properly types of the Eucharistic sacrifice"; but that the proper types, or figures thereof, always are those which set forth the LORD's Body in such form as that the people feed thereon. According to this, there are only three types of the Eucharist, viz. the Paschal Lamb, (of which we have just spoken in St. Paul's words) the Manna in the wilderness, which is hardly to be called an offering, (except, perhaps, that part of it which *was laid* up before the LORD, for a memorial to the LORD and His people,)—and the Bread and Wine offered by Melchisedec, which is the exactest type of all.

The Roman doctrine also loses sight of the distinct purpose for which the figure of Melchisedec's Priesthood was divinely given. It is by virtue of CHRIST's fulfilling that type, that the Priesthood "abideth ever"

among us: and in that type there is no victim to slay, no blood to shed. "Bread and Wine" are brought forth before the LORD, and blessed: the rest is done by the omnipotency of CHRIST'S Word, "This is My Body"—which gives the *reality*, of what Melchisedec gave the figure only; and unites the expiatory value of the Aaronic type, to the communicative value of Melchisedec's. If CHRIST had simply blessed Bread and Wine, and given thanks to God, and a benediction to his Disciples, he would, perhaps, have seemed to fulfil, outwardly, Melchisedec's typical Priesthood; but not Aaron's, which required a "*body* to be prepared," and offered. But when CHRIST added to the Bread and Wine of Melchisedec, "this is My Body," He united, virtually and for ever, the two Priesthoods in Himself; and henceforth the Priesthood of Melchisedec, as "having an endless life," with the *virtue* of CHRIST'S Body now allied thereto, "liveth and abideth for ever." So that we have, in CHRIST, the expiatory value of the one Priesthood, united with the "unchangeable" duration of the other; the outward ritual of Melchisedec alone remaining. That of Aaron passes away; but yet its *virtue* remains.—The Roman notion, of slaying CHRIST over again is, therefore, as much a Judaizing, as is the Puritan notion, of only thinking of the expiation, and forgetting its abiding power in the Church. Either opinion overlooks the Melchisedec Priesthood, and thinks only of the Levitical.

The error is the more to be dwelt on, because it is one of the greatest obstacles to the reception of the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Clear away Transubstantiation and the revolting conception, that CHRIST is put to death in the Sacrifice, and every Christian heart will move towards so blessed a truth as,

that He is therein spiritually offered to His FATHER, with all His merits, and communicated to His faithful people. Not only does Holy Scripture give no promise, that Aaron's Priesthood, or its rites should be continued, but expressly teaches the very *reverse*, viz.—that it would be *superseded* by a Priesthood to come; while the Priesthood of Melchisedec is spoken of as taken up by CHRIST, and having “an endless life.”

How, finally, this Priesthood of CHRIST descends upon His people and remains among them, imparting all blessing, must now be shown. But let it not seem prolix somewhat further to insist on this general truth, that His Priesthood was *intended* so to abide among us. We cannot doubt, (as has been said,) that *whatever* CHRIST came to bring in His Revelation, he intended (unless He otherwise intimates) to remain among His people: and, also, that the continual pleading of our pardon, by the merits of an abiding Sacrifice, and the continued application of those merits to us, is as needful for our souls, as for those who lived 1800 years ago. But further: The contrast held up in Scripture, between the legal Priesthood, which was to pass from the earth, and Melchisedec's, which was to abide; between the legal Priesthood, which was transmitted “according to the law of a carnal commandment,” and Melchisedec's, which was not transmitted by such means, but lived on “after the power of an endless life,” will lead us to the same conclusion.

If there were no continuance of CHRIST's Priesthood on earth, there would be no ground for comparing or contrasting the respective modes of their existence. If more were now known of the mystery, and character, and destiny, of Melchisedec, this argument might receive more striking cogency; but the sacred writer

to the Hebrews, having mentioned Melchisedec as having been "made like unto the SON of GOD, and abiding a Priest continually," checks and restrains what he seemed going to say, and adds (as if the subject were too sacred to be set before unwilling and unprepared minds,) "of Melchisedec, I have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing." Perhaps it was God's Will, that His people should learn the most sacred truths humbly.

If we knew for certain all the meaning of the words "endless life" as applied to Melchisedec himself, we should more unerringly urge the actual parallel between that and CHRIST's. The argument is however sufficiently conclusive to establish a continuance, of *some* sort, of CHRIST's Priesthood on earth. The two modes of continuance are compared and contrasted. Now what it means to continue a priesthood by the law of a carnal commandment, the past history of the case will explain. How a Priesthood is continued by living on one "endless life," the history of CHRIST's religion OUGHT also to explain: it ought to show that the Melchisedec actions of CHRIST were meant to live on in CHRIST's Church as well as in His person. So if it be borne in mind, that the principal outward mark, or rite of the Melchisedec Priesthood was, the blessing Bread and Wine to heavenly uses, it will be difficult for any to question, that this peculiar Melchisedec action was designed to abide in the Church; for CHRIST immediately commanded His representatives, the Apostles, (whom He sent as His Father sent Him)—"*Do this* in remembrance of Me." And as often as we do it, we (in the typical action of "breaking the bread") do show forth ("*εις την αναμνησιν*") our LORD's death until He comes!

But further ; the Apostle to the Hebrews tells us, that by CHRIST's coming, there was a " change of the Priesthood, and a change of the Law." It is not said that He came to destroy the law ; but to " fulfil it," or carry it out, and so practically supersede it by its own development. It is not said, that all priesthood, or law, was now abolished ; but only " changed, as was also the law" ; and the method of its transmission from sire to son, " carnally," changed, after the pattern of Melchisedec. All this exactly corresponds with the history of Christianity, which shows itself a continuation of the former revelation, except in those respects which were marked to be altered.

But, not to diverge from the subject immediately before us, let us look to the institution of the Eucharist itself. At the time of the Passover Sacrifice, the Eucharist was first celebrated ; and with all sacrificial actions. As if to prevent any mistake arising from our LORD's having nothing more, apparently, than a Melchisedec offering of bread and wine in his hands, He had promised before, to give His " flesh and blood"—" meat indeed and drink indeed,"—a "*Body*." "THIS IS MY BODY"! Surely there is something wholly unaccountable in all this, if no Sacrifice were intended after all.—Then CHRIST's being so importantly watched and minutely described ; His looks, His words, His acts, is surely remarkable : His looking up to heaven ; His "taking bread" ; "blessing the bread," and then "breaking" it, and pronouncing it His *Body*. Why such noting of every particular, if nothing extraordinary?—"After that, the Cup"—(for the sacrifices of old had their libations and a pouring out of blood as well as an offering, and consuming of the BODY of a victim) ; and "giving thanks," saying, "this is My

Blood!” Then His bidding His chosen twelve “*Do this*”; (the very words in which an ancient sacrifice might be commanded, “*Do this,*”¹ being equivalent, in sacrificial language, to “perform this sacrifice.”) And after the solemn Rite is concluded by eating and drinking what the Lord had given, “they sang an hymn”; another sacrificial ceremony of the Jews, especially at the Passover Sacrifice. Surely, if there were no other allusion to the subject in Scripture; if Malachi had never prophesied that “sacrifice, and a pure offering, with incense of prayer,” (as St. Irenæus paraphrases it,) should be offered among the Gentiles in Messiah’s time, “from the rising to the setting sun”; if St. Paul had never spoken to the Romans of this “offering” (corruptly translated “offering up,”) of the Gentiles “being sanctified by the HOLY GHOST”; nor told the Hebrews that “we have an *altar*”; nor drawn a parallel to the Corinthians between the Table of the Lord and the ancient altars; and between the Ministers of CHRIST, and those who of old “lived of the sacrifice”; I say, had none of this been recorded, but only the facts of the institution of this sacrament, with its Melchisedec rites, and its atoning import “this is My body,” enough would have been said to stamp the true Sacrificial character on the Eucharist at the time: and for its Continuance it would have been enough to know, that it was commanded to be done: “do this.”

But much more may be said; CHRIST’S words “This is My body,” have really no adequate explanation, except on the belief that they have a Sacrificial meaning. If we lose sight of “Sacrifice,” what would be the import of these awful words? Was there any similarity between that Bread and a Body, human or

¹ See Johnson’s Unbloody Sacrifice, in loc.

divine? Nothing can seem more far-fetched than the Puritan theory that CHRIST meant "this is a figure of My Body": for nothing could well be less like a human body, (or less of a metaphor of a Body,) than the offered bread. If He had meant, as some latitudinarians have said, that HE conveyed His grace or His influence only, and that the bread was but the outward means; then surely it would have been obvious to have said "this is my influence," or "this represents my grace." But yet CHRIST's words are, "This is My BODY." Why "His body"? Why not His spirit? in so spiritual a religion, as He came to establish. But if we "discern the LORD's Body," we discern it as our Sacrifice; nor otherwise could it have been referred to, as to be feasted on or eaten, except as a Sacrifice continued in His Church. Scripture plainly enough speaks to this, both in the Psalms and the Hebrews, "Sacrifices and offerings (such, adds the Apostle, guarding his meaning, as were offered by *the law*), Thou wouldst not—but a BODY hast Thou prepared Me": and, "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God." He "taketh away the first, to establish the second." Sacrifices of blood are done away; our "heavenly things are purified with better sacrifices than these."¹ "Dicuntur mundari cœlestia in quantum per sacramentum novæ legis purgantur quæ impediunt ab ingressu cœlestium."

Proceeding from this scriptural and even historical view of the Christian Sacrifice, and the Priesthood

¹ S. Th. Aquinas points out that this phrase must refer to the Eucharistic offering; the "heavenly things" in the future world having no need of purification, being undefiled. "Sed e contra: In cœlo nulla est immunditia; . . . cœlestia intelliguntur ea quæ pertinent ad statum ecclesiæ presentis."—Ep. ad Hebræos.

continued in CHRIST for ever, let us then direct our thoughts also to the theory of the mode of continuance of this Sacerdotal grace in the Church. We may rejoice to know that CHRIST has not given over into the hands of man, absolutely, *any* of his mediatorial offices.—He has not ceased to be, in the truest and sublimest sense, the only Teacher, the only Ruler, the only Priest. Thus we know that His Church will never fail to teach His truth, because it is HE Who ever teaches through her instrumentalities, according to the promise of this dispensation, “all thy children shall be taught of the LORD, and great shall be the peace of thy children.” Though His Apostle said, “there is no need that any teach us, but as that same anointing teaches,” and the Prophet foretold, “they shall not teach every man his neighbour, saying, know the LORD”; it is true that CHRIST still Teaches men through given channels, even those to whom He said “go teach all nations,” and, “he that heareth you, heareth Me.” The same holds also of CHRIST’S Ruling, and His Priestly, powers. He it is who exercises them—but through men to whom He said, “ye shall sit on thrones;” and, “do this.”

In fulfilling CHRIST’S functions, “as in His person” on earth, the Church’s ministers then act not *personally*, but ministerially, “for CHRIST.” Hence the great danger, of the common statements at least, of the doctrine of the personal intention of the Priest being necessary. CHRIST’S Ministers are not in CHRIST’S place as His Successors; but as the visible representatives of Him Who is invisible. Had the Apostles been sent as CHRIST’S Successors to act in their own name, then sacraments, yea everything, would have depended on their “intention”; they might, (nay in that case would,) even have *preached* themselves; which were blasphemy to

suppose. They were not sent then to succeed Him ; for that would be to supersede Him. They were not sent to perform *similar* acts of teaching, or ruling, or sacrifice ; but to bring to us *His* acts. They had to Teach again what CHRIST had taught, which would be all “brought to their remembrance” ; to establish perpetually CHRIST’s Discipline, begun personally among them by Himself ; to apply to His people for ever CHRIST’s Offering, made once for all by Himself. “As His Father sent Him, so,” (that is to say for the very *same* purposes, to carry out the Father’s heavenly object on earth), *so* sent He His Apostles. The Heavenly Father had an unchangeable purpose of love to our world. He sent CHRIST to accomplish it, and CHRIST sent His Apostles to continue it.

A foolish objection has been sometimes urged, that to make CHRIST’s Apostles to be sent by Him in the same way as the Father first sent His Son, would be to make them give themselves sacrifices. The simple answer is, that the object of the Father is the same for ever : the sameness of the mission of the Apostles and of their LORD, would be destroyed, instead of affirmed, if the *object* of the mission were altered. There is a sameness of object, as well as of mission here affirmed, which makes it binding to say that no office of CHRIST the Mediator, was excepted, or abstracted, when He commissioned His Church to go, ministerially and not personally, *as* God sent Him. And in the great central and all comprehending act of that Priesthood, the Church as acting for Him has ever shown a most sensitive care and fear of her minister ever *seeming* to act in his own person. She has laid down and ever taught the scriptural truth, that on the whole Church, as CHRIST’s Body, “the fulness of Him that filleth all

in all," the grace of the Priesthood has so descended, that in the highest act of that Priesthood, she will not allow her minister to seem to act for himself merely. On the one hand he is the organ of the *whole Church*; and then the representative of her Divine Head also.

What we hold of this blessed Eucharistic Rite, may indeed be summed up in Bramhall's striking words: (*Works* p. 255,) " We acknowledge an Eucharistical Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; a commendative Sacrifice, or memorial of the Sacrifice of the Cross; a representative Sacrifice, or a representation of the Passion of CHRIST before the eyes of His heavenly Father; an impetrative Sacrifice, or an impetration of the fruit and benefit of His Sacrifice by way of real prayer; and lastly an applicative Sacrifice, or an application of His merits to our souls."

Nor would Bossuet, in the moderate days of Romanism, venture on more than this: "Atque ut omnis tollatur ambiguitas, si eo sensu accipiatur offerendi vocabulum quo in Epistolâ ad Hebræos sumitur, ut veram hostiæ mortem importet, Christum nec in Eucharistiâ, nec alibi jam offerri profitebimur."¹

According to the belief of the Church, all the grace and blessing which we enjoy, flows to us from the Priesthood of CHRIST Himself, as the head and fountain of our life. CHRIST, by making Himself a Sacrifice, obtained all the blessings of heavenly grace for men. Without that Sacrifice we should still be under the curse. He has obtained for us every blessing we have for eternity. He obtained all, by the virtue of His own acts personally as our High Priest; he continues those acts in His Church by perpetuating ministeri-

¹ *Expositio Doc. Cath.*, p. 152. Ed. 1680.

ally His own Priesthood and Sacrifice in it; instituting channels of grace to convey His merits and benefits to our souls and bodies. Of the fulness of grace in His Priesthood, we *all* have received, "and grace on account of His grace." All baptized men have received a portion of the grace of CHRIST's Priesthood; but not of the power to *continue* the grace of that Priesthood: such power resides in the Church corporate (to whom the promises are made), and is only put forth through those organs whom CHRIST appointed to act in His place.—Had CHRIST appointed no one to act in His place after the Apostles, it might have happened that Baptism, for example, might have conveyed to that generation of the faithful the blessings of CHRIST's sacrifice, in a measure. But the persons so baptized only could not have *imparted* that portion of the priesthood which, by grace, was theirs. But "as My Father hath sent Me, so send I you," provides for every thing. It continues to men the ever-open Fount of Grace on earth; and from this Fount, the channels may ever proceed. So far as all Christians receive of CHRIST's grace in His Church, they are all said to be "made kings and priests to God." So far as all form but one body in CHRIST, all join with the act of the Minister in the great Eucharistic offering, which he offers "as in the person of CHRIST," acting for the whole Church. But none can act for CHRIST specially, except those whom He "sent" to do it, and bade "*Do this.*" To convey the grace of CHRIST through its *existing* channels, the Church may, in case of necessity, appoint inferior officers, or at times perhaps the laity; whom she commissions to baptize, in pressing needs. But the Eucharist does not exist till it is consecrated; and it requires

a power and mission from CHRIST Himself. So that we may say the Church could never in any emergency, save by a miraculous voice from heaven, authorise any but a Priest to celebrate the Eucharistic Rite.

The peculiar function, therefore, of the Priesthood is in respect of the Sacrament of the Altar, in contemplating which, the Priesthood is unspeakably the highest part of the Church's ministry. A Bishop always is a Priest; but Episcopal function is directed towards the "mystical body" only. The Bishop is to be regarded as a Priest, and something *more*; but his highest and most glorious function is that which he shares with all the Priesthood — viz., in respect of the most Holy Sacrament. This function was of old thought to be shared, in a remote degree, by every office-bearer in the Church, who had to prepare the sanctuary, or the worshippers for their approach to the holy altar. The catechists, the readers, the very door-keepers, would in primitive days have received the benediction and sanction of the Church in their office, out of reverence for all things, even distantly approaching the holy service where the LORD makes Himself "known to His people in the breaking of bread."

Now the Church, as was said, has shown all solemn care respecting the ministry of this Most Holy Sacrament. In exercising our functions as Priests, conveying grace to the people through other of CHRIST's sacramental channels of grace, we often speak apparently as if in our own name; though as CHRIST's instruments. But it is quite different in respect to the LORD's Supper; there we speak only as "in the person of CHRIST." At each fresh opening (so to express it,) of the Fount of Grace, day by day in the Church, every where, the Priest is but a humble

repeater of CHRIST's words and actions at the time of instituting the Eucharist. On the one hand, when we Baptize, we say "*I baptize thee*"; though we add of course, "in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." So when we bless Christians in Holy Matrimony, we say, "*I pronounce them to be man and wife*"; though then too we add, "in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." Or when we are called to the dying bed, and use the solemn Visitation service, we say, "*I absolve thee*"; and add, "in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." But in the Holy Eucharist we dare say nothing of the kind—we presume not to say "*I consecrate this to be CHRIST's Body.*" By the command of the Universal Church we simply repeat, recite, as in CHRIST's place, what the Holy Word records of Him—"He took bread, and blessed, and said '*This is My Body*'"! So clear has the Church been of intruding on CHRIST's personal and meritorious Priesthood! (as Puritans have rashly charged her). She says not, (O beautiful and solemn humility of truth!) not one word in her own name—but believes that CHRIST her LORD's own word, "*this is My Body,*" repeated by His chosen servant in His place, evermore effects the wondrous deed, which in "that upper chamber" He effected ere He died. And this Sacrifice, under the form of Melchisedec's rite, we rejoice to believe is ever acceptable to the Father of mercies; and ever the source of unutterable grace to man! "After the order of Melchisedec"—with forms of bread and wine alone outwardly visible—this Priesthood "*continueth ever*" among us; and hereby shall His Church show forth His life-giving death "*until HE comes.*"

From this, CHRIST'S Blessed Sacrifice, there is a perpetual going forth of all blessing to His Church! A ministry without this—an Apostolical Succession without real Priesthood, is a form of godliness without the power. To CHRIST we trace the benefits derived through all our ministrations for Him among His people. All the functions of the Apostolic Succession should be regarded in their union with that the highest of all Sacerdotal functions, in respect of the LORD'S BODY. It is for the Priests to bless and present the people of the LORD, and their offerings; but they become acceptable for HIS sake alone, who is the only Inherent Eternal HIGH PRIEST; and whose instruments they are!

THEREFORE, indeed, the lightest word of a Priest's Benediction, in the Great High Priest's name, ought to have Blessing in it. His every act for souls, and in the name of CHRIST, has efficacy, if sprinkled with His blood! His guidance of the people of CHRIST is a blessing unspeakable, would they but seek it in their souls' trials, instead of undertaking wholly to advise for themselves! For who, in things eternal, is a safe guide for himself? A man will often acquit himself in a case of conscience, when every one else in the world, if all were known, would condemn him. Besides, by not using CHRIST'S Ministry, men may lose the precious balm of His grace, or the needful upbraiding, or the due award of punishment; which every heaven-seeking man would rather settle *now*, than put it off till the Judgment Day. It is a proverb among men, "that no one is a sound judge in his own case." But how, in religion, do many venture it! and go on as they will; approaching the LORD'S Sacrament often, when they had better

take advice first with that same LORD's Minister ; and at other times staying away from that blessed Eucharist with no just reason, and, therefore, to the grieving of the Spirit of the LORD.—And so is it also in all other things.

Thousands of questions there are, in the moral and spiritual history of every soul that seeks to be saved, which cannot be safely or wisely settled, without the Ministry Apostolical, given for no other purpose than the edifying of CHRIST's mystical Body. To what purpose is it that a Ministry speaks and acts in His Name ? Perhaps, alas ! it may be that that despised Ministry of CHRIST's Priests has, after all, a *binding* effect on men's souls, beyond all they believe, or think of !—CHRIST said, " whatever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," as well as " whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven ! " His word, that is spoken, shall judge men in the last day ! And alas, if this be so—if CHRIST's Ministry has, of necessity, this power to bind, perhaps eternally, the hardened rejecter of grace — what a fearful work may be going on and accumulating among us, while we are careless of it all !

" These things, if men would earnestly consider, they may, by God's grace, return to a better mind ; for the obtaining whereof, let us not cease to make humble and earnest prayers to ALMIGHTY GOD, our HEAVENLY FATHER."

PAROCHIAL LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

THE SYNOD.

FROM THE GOSPEL.¹

“FOLLOW ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN.”—
S. MATTHEW iv. 19.

THESE were CHRIST's words to S. Peter, the first Apostle, and S. Andrew his brother; and they bring before us a primary truth of His Gospel, yet a truth well-nigh omitted from the scheme of modern Christianity. Let me explain :

At an early period of our LORD's ministry, He expounded the high spiritual morality of His law, in His sermon on the mount, before all the people. Still later, He spoke those lofty discourses on the Sacraments recorded in the third and sixth of S. John. At last He gave Himself for us, a sacrifice for our sins. After His death, His HOLY SPIRIT inspired and guided certain men, who have written His life and His truth, that the world might have knowledge thereof.—Here is a brief, and I fear complete, sketch of the pervading idea of Christianity in these days. Not only is this the whole that men receive in general, but even this they accept so vaguely, that a great part of it is to

¹ S. Andrew's Day.

them only as a dead letter, from their having no insight into the meaning of those very Scriptures which they in words acknowledge. This is so much the case, that, when we call attention at times to any part of the New Testament, which contains something more than men have been used to think enough, they treat that part as disrespectfully as if it were not as much inspired as the rest, or were, for some reason or other, of less consequence. So that it would seem, that the inspired volume itself is but partially accepted; that is, just so far as that men may derive from it, sufficient information respecting CHRIST, to enable them to say they "believe."

Hierarchy.

Think, for example, of that part of S. Paul's Epistle to the Church of Corinth, in which he commands them to put away an ungodly brother from among them.¹ If such a letter as that of the great Apostle were addressed to any Church among *us* in this country, could we act on it at all? or should we even try? Supposing the matter in complaint were not that which "the law of the land" would touch; would not the generality shake their head at the Apostle's words, and say, "It is of little consequence; you have no authority over me?" Reflect again on these sayings of Scripture; "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your *souls*, as those that must give account."² These words imply surely a Sacred Government of souls on earth; that is, a "Hierarchy." For by this term Hierarchy, we do not mean, as Romanists say, "a government in sacred *things*"—(a definition which enables them to assign all sacred authority over *men* to the Pope alone;) no, but a sacred government of *souls*

¹ 1 Cor. v. 13.

² Heb. xiii. 17.

during their earthly probation. These words, "them that rule and watch for your souls," or these, "tend the flock of God,"¹ can mean no less than "hierarchy:" and yet assuredly, this forms no vital part of modern Christianity among us. Who recognizes any authoritative "rule over him" in matters of religion? People believe, to a certain extent, certain doctrines; and some will go farther and take the Holy Sacrament; but it is generally considered, that no one has any right to "rule" them in such matters.

Now compare our condition in this respect, with that of others, on either side of us. The Romanists and Dissenters are visible bodies, held together respectively by their own laws. They are not independent individuals: their systems forbid them to be so—as indeed any attempt to realize a scriptural or primitive Christianity always forbids it. A Roman or a Dissenting teacher, knows his flock; examines every one before admission to communion; "calls his own sheep by name," and enrolls them; or, if they fall or go astray fatally, he excludes them from the fold. This is the more remarkable among Dissenters, because they, in theory, deny the visible continuity and authority of the Christian body; yet do they of necessity resort to these earthly imitations of CHRIST's heavenly plan of a "Church." The class meetings of Wesleyans, the social meetings of Independents, their examinations and excommunications, all indicate not only human nature's need of guidance and discipline; but also, that the system of each man standing apart and acting for himself, is not Scriptural Christianity.

The determination of man, in his natural and fallen

Roman and
Puritan
Systems.

Subjection
of the
human will.

¹ 1 Pet. v. 2, and Acts xx. 27.

state, is to be independent of authority, and act on his own opinions—‘our wills are our own; who is Lord over us?’ One fundamental idea of Christianity is the destruction of this ungodly tendency; the gathering men together, to live under rule, and bring every high and independent thought “into subjection to CHRIST.” And the great battle of Anti-christ, in the last times, will be the lawlessness of the human will, lifting itself against the dominion of CHRIST. We are told, at times, of a “strife of opinions,” a war of ideas, coming upon us: my brethren, this is but half the truth. It is not for the opinions merely, it is for the *persons of men*, that the Church will have to strive. CHRIST came not only as a Teacher, or a Priest, but as the King of Zion, having the “heathen also for His inheritance;” yea, His Royalty was the accusation for which He died.—And His Church, if she will “follow Him,” will not be the instructor only. “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Mutual
knowledge
of Priest and
People.

Now, though the laity of our Church are far from guiltless in this matter—roughly putting from them the laws of CHRIST, and often keeping only, (if it may be so expressed,) to a few of the Christian opinions; yet not any are more loud than they, in complaining of the want of unity, the want of intercourse, the want of knowledge and connexion, among the different members of our body. Dissenters (they say) know and feel with one another; so do Romanists; and why not we? The very children of our Parish Schools are independents in heart, before they have left us a year!—They indeed, who thus complain, often do not wish for intercourse of the right sort, after all; they complain probably, that they have not the presence of their Clergyman, in the visitings of daily life, and convivial

or home intercourse: but that is far surely from what is meant, when we speak of the spiritualities and relationships which should exist between a pastor and his people. The place to know your Clergyman is in his Church, daily worshipping with him, as the head of the spiritual family—or, if possible, within its holy precincts, to ask, if need be, and receive his guidance for your souls' trials, his support against sin and sorrow. If people of one parish were more united *thus*—more praying together in Church—more joining together in holy works—more together in Communion, and holy preparation for it, there would soon come an increase of pure knowledge, and a life of godly discipline, of which the very thought is, in our present state, but a dream.

Let no one think that I am speaking too darkly. I have indeed said but little of what might be said; for there are, perhaps, few of the evils which affect us, which might not be remedied greatly, by a return to “godly discipline;” while yet is it not the fact, that laity and Clergy alike are often ready to destroy every vestige of the discipline of CHRIST, that still survives among us? How lightly will the laity leave their Parish Church! how recklessly will the Clergy invade Parishes where they have no authority, and pretend to give Sacraments which, if unauthorized, are in violation of every law and principle ever heard of since Christianity began! I do not say that one sin will ever excuse another; yet it is not to be wondered at, that the laity have lost so much of the feeling, every where, that they are one body, around the one centre of unity, the Parish Church; when the whole idea of parochial discipline is profaned or despaired of, even among their teachers.

Discipline,
our great
need.

"Commination"
Ser-vice.

One thing there is, which once a year (on Ash-Wednesday) we are all bound most solemnly to do, whether we think of it or not—bound to lament, in Church, the lack of "godly primitive discipline," and to say, it "were much to be wished it were restored"! Little know many who use these words, what they really are so lamenting! It will be my desire, in these lectures, to show how, from the first, CHRIST'S Church, following the mind of His Spirit, has designed and aimed to "gather out of the Gentiles, a people for His name," and rule them by His discipline. Never, probably, in any age, has godly discipline more slept and failed than now. It is the taunt of the Romanist against us, specially, that our whole idea of Church discipline is the regulation of the *Clergy*, and keeping them to their duty, and correcting them. It is the taunt of the Dissenter, that any one may approach the Holy Mysteries of our LORD'S Death among us. It is the taunt of the infidel, that we pretend to have Church "laws," which we never have enforced, and never mean to enforce—and yet fear to alter. All these taunts are, alas, too well founded. But, by God's mercy, one step towards restoring the primitive godly discipline may be, the knowing what it *was*—the knowing how CHRIST'S kingdom was, by His Spirit's aid, set in order from the day of Pentecost.

Jurisdiction.

There is also another reason for entering on this important topic at this time. The progress of the controversy with the Church of Rome has brought us inevitably to that part of it which concerns Jurisdiction. The beginning of the controversy was concerning the very existence of the visible Church, which we confess in the Creeds—that glorious and perpetual institution, which has ever been known from age to

age, as "The Church"—never bearing the names of men, but only CHRIST's alone. In close connexion with this, the doctrine of the unbroken Succession of the Ministry from the first, in one perpetual line, inevitably had to be defended; and it seems now, I trust we may say, beyond denial, that the English Church has the Succession; and has ever been here known and regarded, even among her enemies, by this and no other title, "The Church;" and, as such, has borne rule, and ministered, as far as they have been administered at all, the Catholic laws of the Christian society. In other words our "mission," and our "succession," are matters which may be regarded as really settled, in the dispute with Rome. The ground is now shifted, and the controversy is raised as to our "Jurisdiction." It is urged that a Church may not have wholly forfeited her mission, nor lost her succession, but yet by some schismatical acts may have lost her jurisdiction. Here we join issue with the Romanists, as to the fact; and partly as to the principle. On the other hand, the Dissenters, whether they come to our temples, or go to their own meetings (for there are both sorts,) urge that the whole of the Catholic theory of a "Hierarchy" in the Christian dispensation is disputable; that what seems to favour it in Scripture was peculiar to the Apostolic times. Here then we join issue with them. It is wonderful, indeed, that Bible-followers, as they assume to be, should be able to adopt this as a theory: and yet they do, in the face of S. Paul's saying,¹ that the Apostolate should endure till the whole Church was completed. "He gave some Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the

¹ Eph. iv. 12.

edifying of the body of CHRIST: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the SON of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST." God forbid, among us, all shrinking from the truth, that CHRIST'S Ministers are bound, as followers of CHRIST, to be fishers of *men*. Let those who will, be content to be expounders of a Christian literature. Since we believe that we are in Peter's ship, with CHRIST giving us command, shall we shrink from the weight of our responsibilities? Nay, by His grace let us be content with nothing less than this, "the gathering of a great multitude, small and great, and for all there be so many, the net shall not be broken."

Origin of the
Christian
Hierarchy.

Let us then, first of all, endeavour to trace, both in theory and in fact, the origin of the Christian Hierarchy. Our Blessed LORD Himself is the One Teacher of His Church, the One Priest of His Spiritual Temple, and (as has been before said) the One RULER of His Kingdom of Grace. Yet as, in the days of His flesh, "JESUS Himself baptized not, but His disciples," and their act was recognised as His; so, after His ascension, He gave them authority to act as in the "person of CHRIST,"¹ authority for every purpose of His saving mission to our world; sending His Apostles in truth "as His FATHER sent Him" as teachers, as ministers, as Rulers, and this so fully, (however little understood by them at the time,) that it is "as though God did beseech men by the Apostolic voice"; "we pray you in CHRIST'S stead."²

The Three
Offices of
Christ in His
Church.

How marvellously these three offices are mingled in the ministry of the Church, so that the one implies the

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 10.

² 2 Cor. v. 20.

two others in some measure, can hardly fail to strike the mind of the thoughtful reader of God's Word. The Prophetical seems at times to be absorbed in the Sacerdotal, and both to be comprehended in the Regal office. Signs of this union may be seen even among the Old Testament seers, who sometimes assumed priestly and even royal duties ; as did Samuel and Eli. Or again, in some of the kings of the ancient covenant, (being also under the influence of the Spirit of prophecy—and not *mere* kings,) we sometimes recognise a performance of well-nigh purely sacred functions ; as in Solomon at the consecration prayer in his temple ; David in his Prophetic Psalms ; Hezekiah, Josiah, and others in their ordering the temple worship after the Divine pattern. In such instances we have types and shadows of the union of the sacred offices in threefold glory in the Ministry of this Dispensation. Now we doubt not it is the Church's work to bring into subjection our whole nature—to instruct the ignorance, to cleanse the sinfulness, to guide the weakness and waywardness of the whole of our redeemed humanity. Yea, indeed, separable as are these functions in idea, they are not separable in fact. Our teaching is mutilated, our priesthood robbed of half its efficacy, if our Godly discipline be unknown. All three offices were united in CHRIST, and must in some sense be found also in His true representative. For this cause was our Blessed LORD born into our world, "to be a KING ;" and when at length the time arrived for the withdrawing of His personal presence from earth, He took measures for the ordering of His kingdom during the interval between His ascension and His second coming. This is the simple explanation of His whole conduct in choosing His Apostles, and training them, by teaching them

in private what He obscurely announced in public, and keeping them generally about His person to "learn of Him." They were the nucleus of a Society to be formed on the earth.

The pattern
of Judaism
partly fol-
lowed.

The first words He adopted to express the new ideas of the New Dispensation were taken, as far as might be possible, from the old visible Revelation of God to His chosen Israel. The very word "CHURCH" which He chose as the name of His Kingdom when He said, "I will build *my* Church,"¹ was a word already in use among the Jews; as it described either their synagogue or temple. "In the midst of the Church" (said David,) "I will sing praise unto Thee." The earliest recorded rule of discipline given by CHRIST (mentioned in S. Matthew xviii.) is only intelligible on a consideration of its import to Jewish minds. The Jews would not eat with heathen and publicans; hence the phrase, "if he will not hear the Church, let him be to you as an heathen and a publican"—words spoken² by our LORD, long before the Christian Church was so constituted as to be able to act on them; yet words which would have a meaning at once to Jewish ears, and tell the disciples that a Polity would be founded in which regulations should prevail, parallel in some degree with those of Judaism. In a like spirit and yet more definitely, the external Hierarchy of the Jewish system was condescendingly imitated in manifold details of Christianity from the first. Jewish names were used for

¹ Matt. xvi. 18.

² So also our LORD directs the bringing of his people's gifts (S. Matt. v. 23) to the "Altar" (implying the continuance thereof in His Gospel); and S. Paul likens the Apostles to those who ministered "at the Altar," (1 Cor. ix. 13;) and says, "we have an Altar." (Heb. xiii. 10.) And S. Clement calls Deacons, "Levites," a very usual primitive name, &c.

Christian things. The Church was at length regarded as the "Israel" and true Jerusalem; and new converts greeted as "Israelites indeed." And every thing led towards this. The number of the Apostles was fixed to twelve: so there had been twelve Patriarchs of the old system of Israel. Again, the number of the great Jewish council was seventy,—and our LORD adhered to this number, in choosing "other seventy also," to be the next bearers of His will to the cities "where He Himself would come." Then the greatest of the Christian institutions was made to coincide, even in point of time, with the greatest of the Israelitish Church: the Christian Eucharist and Atoning Sacrifice, with the Jewish Passover. The Feast of Pentecost commemorated the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; and on this Festival, CHRIST finally sent His SPIRIT down on the Apostles, fulfilling then the prophecy of Joel, "I will write My law in their hearts." No one would pretend that these were accidental coincidences only. They were, anyhow, the beginnings, in point of fact, of the Hierarchy, or Sacred Rule, set up by CHRIST on earth.

Before the LORD had left the earth, one of the Twelve had fallen; the first act of the remaining eleven was to fill up the vacant place and fulfil the prophecy, "his bishopric let another take." Ecclesiastical history begins properly from this event—the supply of the first additional link to the chain of Apostolic succession. The preparations for setting up the Church being now completed, the SPIRIT descended, and the system began in the baptisms of Pentecost. "Barnabas and Paul" were soon called to the office of missionary Bishops to the Gentiles, while S. Peter preached chiefly to the Circumcision, and S. James presided in the first Church, Jerusalem, he being the nearest of kin, after

The Christian Polity set up.

the flesh, to our Blessed Lord. All this may be seen in the "Acts of the Apostles," where also it appears that Jerusalem was regarded (and somewhat naturally) as a kind of head quarters, to which from time to time the Apostles came up with reports of their successes in distant parts. It was not indeed the will of God that the old Jerusalem should long retain any such prominence in the new dispensation. The Church was to be Catholic, and not allied to, or rallying round any particular place on earth. This, among other designs of Providence, was accomplished by the destruction of Jerusalem during the lifetime of some of the Apostles. The overthrow of what had so long been "the Holy City," was the overthrow of the sort of regard thus far paid to the 'mother Church' of Jerusalem; a regard overruled in the infancy of Christianity, as a means of preserving a sort of unity in the wide-spreading Church, yet in itself a Judaistic and somewhat carnal means, substituting a local for a Catholic idea of Unity,—an idea of Unity never capable of being practically carried out even under the old dispensation (since not even once a year did the people all go up to their one Temple) an idea therefore wholly incongruous to the Catholic system of the Church. The Church, destined to possess *all* lands, is incapable of having any one earthly centre, and calls men to "set their affections on things above, and not on earth's" holy cities: to seek "one to come," even "an heavenly."

Removal of
Judaism.

The earthly centre of the Christian polity being divinely destroyed by the fall of Jerusalem, and the stronghold of carnal and Judaizing prejudice being thus taken away, the Church of the circumcised Christians lingered on as only a venerated relic of primeval days,

¹ Heb. xi. 15.

for a few years. A line of circumcised Bishops still awhile continued there; until the Jews revolted again against the empire, in consequence of the very name of their city being attempted to be changed to "Ælia," and a heathen temple built on the site where Solomon's had stood in all its glory. The close of this war, and the confirming of the new name of Ælia for Jerusalem, (which so continued to the days of Constantine,) put the final stroke to the hopes of the Judaizers. From that time the Bishops of Jerusalem, or Ælia, were Gentiles (A.D. 135). Meanwhile the mind of the Spirit had been manifesting itself in forming a nobler Unity for the diffused body of believers, instead of the old Jewish form confined to one spot. Unrestrained by that yoke which their Jewish ancestors were not able to bear, the Christians, confined to no place on earth, carried with them, wherever they spread over the wide world, a law of Unity capable of Catholic diffusion—carried with them their principles and their polity, mysteriously linked together and spreading together in a wholly unearthly way; they themselves being "strangers and sojourners on the earth," having only a celestial "citizenship," πολιτευμα.¹

The various Societies of Christians which had sprung up throughout the empire, might at the fall of Jerusalem, and the death of most of the Apostles at the same time, have become independent societies, but for the overruling Providence of God, which had reserved, to be then developed, a nobler Unity than that of any earthly locality, a more perfect than that of any one human head, an Unity represented indeed and made visible in every place by the local Ruler of the Church; but an Unity comprehending the whole "one body," and in the truest sense, Catholic.

Doctrine of
Unity.

¹ Phil. iii. 20.

The First
Synod.

The germ of this system was seen in the first Synod held by the Apostles, which hesitated not to speak by the authority of the HOLY GHOST, and give laws to the Christian converts in remotest places; "it seemed good to the HOLY GHOST and to us."¹ Had S. Peter ever thus spoken, his supremacy had not now been questioned. Long before the Episcopate had stretched itself to distant societies of Christians, the laws of the Church's synod were conveyed from place to place, by Divine direction. Apostles travelled from city to city, "delivering them the *decrees* for to keep, which had been ordained by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem."² Doubtless it took time to make known in far off provinces these Apostolic "decrees," or canons. So late as the year 65, S. Paul sends to the Corinthians new directions, and then adds, "The rest will I set in order when I come."³ But of the principle there was no doubt in the first ages of Christianity—"there is One Body and One Spirit";⁴ and the principle was carried out into the conclusion, that where the "One Body" is gathered together, the "One Spirit" speaks the truth of CHRIST.

Catholicity,
the Theory
of the Synod.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Divine SPIRIT descended to make the one Church His habitation, fulfilling His promise who had said "I will send you the Spirit of Truth,"⁵ there were gathered together devout persons from all parts of the Roman world; "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, strangers of Rome, Cretes and Arabians;" and they were baptized very soon in thousands. Soon again were they dispersed to their own distant and

¹ Acts xv. 28.

² Acts xvi. 4.

³ 1 Cor. xi. 34.

⁴ Eph. iv. 4.

⁵ John xvi. 7.

various homes; but they ceased not still to be the "habitation of the Spirit,"¹ they were still the one body "knit together by that which every joint supplied."² Consequently, on all questions that might hereafter arise, the one holy and true voice of the Church could be best obtained by re-assembling the diffused elements of the spiritual society. The Unity of the Church, from the first, found its only expression in SYNODS, which were the re-gathering together of the scattered voices of the Pentecost; the meeting of that One Body, the dwelling-place of the ONE Spirit. There is no other theory of Unity, either in Scripture or primitive antiquity, than this; that the One Spirit of Truth dwells in the One Body, and is manifest in Synod, according to the fulness of the "gathering together"³ from time to time;—manifest "where two or three are gathered together"⁴ as CHRIST'S, "agreeing on earth touching anything;" still more manifest in provincial councils of the saints; but manifest with plenary grace in Œcumenical Synods.

Most important it is that in the present state of our ecclesiastical controversies, this point should not be hastily passed over. There is nothing in Scripture or in primitive antiquity, sanctioning the modern Roman theory, that the Unity of the Church depends on its having but "one visible head" on earth. The Catholic belief is, by "ONE SPIRIT, we are baptized into One Body."⁵ Nor let it be grotesquely argued that the term "One Body," *implies* one head; as well might we wish to insist on carrying out the metaphor in other respects, and say it implies two hands, or two eyes. The metaphor

Visibility, a local attribute of the Church.

¹ Eph. ii. 22.

² Eph. iv. 16.

³ See "Lectures on the Apostolical Succession," pp. 135, 136.

⁴ Matt. xxviii. 19.

⁵ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

of the "one-ness of the body" is used in reference to, and connexion with, the "One Spirit;" and not in reference to the headship, which is quite a distinct metaphor, and the passages where it occurs refer the Headship expressly to CHRIST. Visibility is an attribute of the Church truly; but it is necessarily a *local* attribute. The Church Militant on earth is visible to its members and to the world *in every place* where it sojourns; and its local head is every where the organ both of its unity and its visibility. But one *visible* head for a Church that is Catholic, and scattered in far distant lands, is a contradiction in terms. A visible head is the local head, if the metaphor means anything.

Unity, an attribute of the "whole body in heaven and earth."

Such then is the primitive condition of the Christian society; a baptized community, under sacred government, Apostolic rule; regulated by its own Synodical laws,—laws enacted under the guidance of the One Spirit, who inhabits and unites, from age to age, the whole "One Body in heaven and earth."¹ Even individual Apostles were subject to this law of Catholic Unity—the decision of the One Spirit, speaking in the One Body in council assembled.

The Members of the Church.

Long after the Council of Jerusalem had settled the question respecting the observance of the old law; we find S. Paul praising those who became "followers of the Churches": and he rejoices that there was made "known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." He speaks of the Apostles themselves, and all other "members," as "set *in the Church*";² and mentions that even S. Luke's travelling about with him was because he had been "chosen of the Church" to that work.³ Nor can anything be more

¹ Eph. iii. 15.

² 1 Cor. xii. 28.

³ 2 Cor. viii. 19.

definite and striking than the warning tone of Revelation in its closing pages, on this very topic of the Church being, according to her measure in each place, the medium of the SPIRIT'S voice; and not any one earthly head. CHRIST personally, when on earth, had challenged attention when He spake to men, saying, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear;" so, long after, over and over again is this repeated, "He that hath an ear let him hear, what the SPIRIT saith unto the Churches."¹

Now what are the most ancient and most authentic remains of the Church's history, but solemn corroborations of her Synodical powers and authority from the very first? The Canons of the Apostles are relics of the earliest Christian age, and doubtless contain many (indeed all that have come down to us) of the very enactments of the first founders of the faith. "The code of the Universal Church" (says the learned Bishop Barlow in his "Remains,") "is indeed, next the Bible, the most authentic ecclesiastical book in the world." It is fully admitted by the Church of England—having been sealed to us by the Fourth General Council. To the Canons of the Universal Church we appeal therefore in behalf of this Scriptural principle, that the One Spirit speaks in the One Body; and in defence of this conclusion also, that the whole regulation and jurisdiction of the Christian body is subject to the laws promulgated in the Œcumenical Synod. To illustrate this by examples and proofs, would be to make extracts from every Council that ever sat, for six hundred years and more.

It is of the utmost consequence that this truth should be well understood, that the Church is above

Code of the
Universal
Church.

Supremacy
of the
Church.

¹ Rev. iii., iv.

the greatest Bishops: and that the Church in Synod has both declared the faith, and regulated from time to time the discipline of the body Catholic. The possession of jurisdiction does indeed imply a degree of the legislative as well as executive authority,¹ (this is inevitable from the very nature of the case), yet as to all the higher acts of spiritual legislation, the highest officer of the Church—bishop, archbishop, or patriarch, is subject to her laws. We hold that the power of jurisdiction flows in the Church, in those channels instituted from the beginning: but the right of exercising it is also regulated and limited by the Apostolic and Catholic laws. What may be the duties, rights, and powers of individual local governors of churches, when through a long course of years Œcumenical Councils have been suspended; and Provincial synods set aside, and individual Bishops stand in no awe of each other's power, may be at times difficult to determine. But no sins of any generation, nor "change of circumstances," (to give a softer name,) can alter this principle of our fundamental Christianity, "there is ONE Body, and One Spirit."

No Apostolic
Supremacy.

The gift of the Spirit being thus to the CHURCH, the mystical Body of the LORD, (which is a "Body" viewed in two ways, relatively to the SPIRIT of GOD Who inhabits it, and the SON of GOD Who is its Head); it is impossible to regard the manifestation of the Spirit, merely as a manifestation through individual Apostles. From the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit that "sat on" the Apostles "filled the whole house." Henceforth the Apostolate is not to be conceived of apart from the Church where the Spirit dwells. For the edification and government of the Church, various

¹ As may be seen in the case of the simplest priest. See Lecture IV.

channels of grace were instituted, first "Apostles," Evangelists, Deacons; then Presbyters and others. The Apostolate included all these from the first; and the Apostolate was the organ of the Church.¹ "Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, all are yours." Individual Apostles² "had not dominion over the Church's faith, but were helpers of its joy."

A very common thought indeed among us, is that a "three-fold Ministry" had from the first, a separate Divine authority over the Church in distinct degrees of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; which is reversing the great fact of Scripture and antiquity, that these orders arose out of the Apostolate, to be the organs of the Church's grace and power. The theory of Popery, and the theory of mere Episcopalianism, (a form of modified Popery,) would make the Gift of the Spirit to the Apostles distinct from the One Indwelling, in the One Body of the Lord.

The unanswerable argument against the claims of the Bishop of Rome to be the visible and absolute monarch of the Church, is this, that the whole body of laws of the Universal Church, from the beginning, assume exactly the opposite—viz. that all Bishops, not excepting the Roman, are subject to the Canons. And if this is an argument against the assumptions of the Pope, it is equally so against the theory of the absolute independence of Bishops. It is not one Canon, or one ancient Council, but *all* that we rely on; unless every Council of the Church from the first, has been in fearful error, and been intruding into the jurisdiction of Bishops, without any warrant, regulating their duties, taking account of their faithfulness, or judging them for their unfaithfulness; judging an

Ministry
not apart
from the
Church.

No Papal
Supremacy;
nor Episco-
pal.

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 22.

² 2 Cor. i. 24.

Honorius of Rome, as much as a Nestorius of Constantinople. It is undeniable that the jurisdiction of Popes, Patriarchs, Exarchs, or Bishops, should be exercised in accordance with the Canons: so that the same conclusion results from considering the facts of the Church's life on earth, as from regarding its principle. The greatest of Bishops, just as of old the greatest of Apostles, were on a spiritual equality, directly they met together in Council. "They that seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me."¹ If jurisdiction be a result of the gift of the Spirit, and if the gift of the Spirit be to the Body of the Church; let the habitual belief and practice of the Church, in all her synodical acts, unerringly assure us, that ordinary jurisdiction must be subject to the Canonical decisions. True, a dispensing power is sometimes recognised; but no Council even professedly oecumenical, has denied that even the Pope's jurisdiction is regulated by the Holy Canons of the Church. The Council of Constance itself boldly asserts it; and Trent denies it not. So, again, among ourselves, every one can see that the same principle practically is maintained: no Bishop is justified in acting in court, or even authoritatively in his diocese, in opposition to, or defiance of, the Church's laws, even to the alteration of a single Rubric or Canon, settled by the Synod of the Church.

The Hierarchy acts
"jure divino."

This conclusion, as to the Synod's proper authority in regulating the jurisdiction of the Church, need not, in any degree, interfere with the fact, that the authority of the Hierarchy is exercised, *jure divino*. (In fact, on this "Divine Right" rests its Dispensing power in cases of emergency.) It did not interfere with it, from

¹ Gal. ii. 6.

the beginning ; the “ spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets.” The gifts of the Apostles were no hindrance to the synodical voice of the council of Jerusalem. The Synod is not the founder or originating cause of the power of the Hierarchy ; it *is* the Hierarchy itself, in solemn *συναξίς*. It lays down from time to time, the laws for the exercise of that power, which the Apostolate inherited from CHRIST Himself, and “ divideth unto the Church,” according to His will, signified in the Synod. How broad and ample indeed is the power of the Church in Synod, in regulating the functions and jurisdiction of the Apostolate, can only be appreciated by an intimate acquaintance with the Universal Canons, referring as they do, to the minutest matters of detail in the Christian community. This will be in some degree apparent, when, in our next Lecture, we dwell specially on the Episcopate, as the Jurisdiction continuing the Apostolate in the Church.

Theologians have been accustomed to make a distinction of the Hierarchy of Orders, and the Hierarchy of Jurisdiction. And this is necessary in all ways. By the ancient rules of the Church, the Holy Orders were indelible, even in the case of those who had been, for unfaithfulness, degraded. Whatever jurisdiction was any time possessed by any spiritual officer of the Church, *ceased* the instant he was degraded ; but his Orders, as such, could never cease, even though he were put down to the rank of the laity, or put out of the Church. True, he could not exercise the functions of his Orders, but they remained in him, so that at any future restoration, on repentance, he would not be re-ordained. This distinction of the Hierarchy of Orders, from the Hierarchy of Jurisdiction, will much assist in clearly

Hierarchy of
Orders ; and
of Jurisdic-
tion ; dis-
tinguished.

understanding this subject. Of the Hierarchy of Orders, we shall speak as little as we can, in these Lectures: we shall speak of Orders, so far as they are connected with Jurisdiction; and no further. Nor need we enter on the often disputed question of the number of "Orders," originally instituted in the Church: since if we were to mingle our consideration of Orders and Jurisdiction, we might speak of three, "Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." If we were to go back to the very beginning, we might speak of one only, the "Apostolate." If we come to the second and third centuries, minor orders of necessary ministries would swell the number to seven, or eight, or nine ranks. These questions, however, have no essential bearing on the subject now before us. The Synod regulated all things in its assemblings, provincial at first, "general" as soon as that was practicable. By the year 70, about the fall of the Jewish polity, representatives of the Apostles were fixed all over the Christian community, one in each Church. But these were to hold the "faith once delivered to the Saints," and rule by the Apostolic laws of the Church.

The Patri-
archates.

Let the state of things thus set forth, be summed up, and we behold the example of the first days of the faith. The Bishops of thousands of churches were linked together by half-yearly Provincial Councils at the least,¹ in which the very strictest rules were laid down, for the government of the Bishops themselves; these were not left to their own caprice, in the guidance of their *παροικισαι*,—but were as truly under rule, as any of their people—might be deposed for just causes, or degraded, or even excommunicated.² Among the Bishops

¹ Apost. Can. xxxvii.

² Apost. Can. v. vi. xiv., &c.—Niceni Can. xvii. &c.

themselves, there was from the first some distinction made, with the sanction of the Councils of the Church. The Bishop of Alexandria seems at first, after the death of the Apostles, to have been looked to, certainly in the East, as the greatest of the Bishops. In his Church, the Scriptures were more carefully copied, and commented on more largely than elsewhere. Literature had since the time of the Ptolemies found a home in Alexandria, and the Christianity of that Church reaped the benefit; though it was not without injury also, from the philosophizing sects around it. The Bishop of Rome, as dwelling in the Imperial City,¹ and the Bishop of Antioch, where the disciples "first were called Christians," and the Bishop of Jerusalem, had also eminence, as we shall observe, in primitive days, beyond other Bishops. The three former were called Patriarchs: the nature of their Jurisdiction was settled by the Canons of Councils.

So then, while the power of Jurisdiction was inherent Summary. in the Episcopate, it was subjected to the regulations of the Church in Council, and could only be ordinarily exercised in conformity with the Canons. In the authentic code of the Universal Church, in the primitive centuries, we see in the most lively way, how Priests were subject to Bishops, how Bishops were watched over by Metropolitans, and they by Patriarchs; and all ruled by the whole, each "bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of CHRIST."

¹ "The *Fathers* gave primacy to the throne of the elder Rome, because that was the imperial city: xxviii. Can. Chalcedon." (IV. Gen. Co.)

LECTURE II.

THE DIOCESE.

FROM THE GOSPEL.¹

"THERE SHALL BE A ROOT OF JESSE ; AND HE THAT SHALL RISE TO REIGN OVER THE GENTILES, IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST."—ROMANS XV. 12.

The Jurisdiction,
Spiritual.

THE Jurisdiction of the Christian Hierarchy was from the first, in all respects, purely Spiritual. It sustained itself by its own inherent power ; it asked nothing of earth. "Silver and gold have I none," was its lofty language to fallen man, "but such as I have, give I thee." This was unintelligible at first, for the "carnal mind understood not the things of the Spirit of God." It was unintelligible to the Jews, and in CHRIST'S own lifetime, they would fain have "taken Him by force, to make Him King." The Apostles, after His Resurrection, were hardly ready to apprehend it, "saying, LORD, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" It was but slowly that they rose to the divine thought of a new combination henceforth to be made of the spiritual and social elements of human nature, a "new creation." During all the Church's earthly

¹ Second Week in Advent.

history, one of her sorest trials has been from the various attempts, to adapt her to the world ; at one time, by the world making advances towards friendship with her ; at another, by the Church herself aiming at an earthly dominion. Had not the wisdom of God, and His Providence, overruled at one time the friendship and patronage of a Constantine, and at another, destroyed the lofty, but earthly, theory of a Hildebrand, how much soever Christianity might have elevated and ameliorated the old world, it would never realize the Divine idea of a "new creation," wherein dwelleth righteousness.

In the world as it now is, there is already "Jurisdiction" for all worldly ends. "Powers" there are, and they are "ordained of God." They are now a recognized part of His order of Providence, in this dispensation ; they hold a place for the time, in the system of things proceeding onwards to completion, till the end come, "when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of His CHRIST."

Civil Jurisdiction.

Coarse and worldly minds can think of no explanation for the notion of a Hierarchy, except a worldly one—ambition ; a motive quite inadequate, to account for the facts of the Church's life, even on worldly principles. The pure Spirituality of the Hierarchical Jurisdiction must never be lost sight of, if this solemn subject is to be at all truly understood. Let there be plain speaking here. The power to rule Christian men, and guide them in matters of Salvation, implies not the least coercive sway ; conveys not *one* earthly right. "The weapons of our conflict with sin are not carnal." Gifts of grace to the faithful—censures and excommunications for the unfaithful—with whatsoever miraculous

Theory of the Spirituality.

powers God may add, if He please; these are all our spiritual armour. If men will be baptized into CHRIST's fellowship, we will bless them; if they will obey, we will watch for their souls; if they disobey, we will reform them, or exclude them. And we are a "savour of life unto life, or of death unto death." And "what we bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and what we loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." All this is Spiritual, and if solemnly believed in, and faithfully acted on, GOD's mighty Presence would accompany it, and "all the ends of the world should fear Him." But CHRIST, in consigning His people thus to a moral and divine Government, interfered not to set aside GOD's ordinance of civil Government. Men's earthly property, their earthly liberty, their earthly lives are under the Jurisdiction of the State. Their souls are designed to be the subjects of the Jurisdiction of the Church. "We watch for souls." I say not that Spiritual Jurisdiction may not lawfully be mixed up with things of earth; but I say, that so far as it is thus mingled, it must needs be subjected to earthly laws, and may not introduce and plead a heavenly exemption.

The
Practice.

Go back then in thought, to the state of the first Christians, the subjects of the Roman Empire, civilly; the subjects of the Apostles spiritually, having been "baptized into their fellowship." The Christians, who lived near each other, kept together, and were, on principle, "One Body." This dwelling together, and worshipping together also, implied every where, a subjection to one RULE. There was (as has been observed) no indiscriminate admission to their holy assemblies of any one who might please to call himself

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 16.

² St. Matt. xvi. 19.

a Christian. So strict a body were they, and so compact, that Apostolic letters or communications to the various Christian sojourners, in far-spread localities, every where illustrate one Divine plan at work. There was a perfect knowledge of the Christian people, possessed by their chiefs in every place or neighbourhood. In every locality of "sojourn" for Christians, "every city," S. Paul himself tells us, he set "elders" "to rule in word and doctrine." The baptized who lived in villages,¹ were placed under the guidance of the ruler of the nearest "parish," *παροικία*, or city, the One Apostolic deputy, appointed by "laying on of hands," and variously called Bishop, Angel, or Apostle. The Bishop was then accustomed to send out his Presbyters, to evangelize the neighbourhood, and perform Divine Offices for the Christian converts. For about three hundred years, the rule prevailed that to the Bishop over each "parish," the tithes and offerings of Christians were paid; and he apportioned to his Missionary Priests, such stipends as he thought right.

The probable origin of the word "Parish" (to which Primitive παροικία. so little sacredness is now attached) is perhaps to be found in the earliest monuments of our Religion. The primitive and perhaps the truest description of a Christian was, that he was a "sojourner on the earth." Living amidst a generally heathen population, and in earthly things subject to their laws, he must have felt specially disengaged from earth. Christians too, who, by their law of unity, came together and worshipped together, if they "sojourned" in the same locality, naturally formed one body of "sojourners." So S. Peter himself uses this expression, as if symbolical of our earthly condition altogether; (as well as descrip-

¹ Apost. Can. xxxiv.

tive of its outward seeming.) Having first addressed the Christians as “strangers scattered” throughout Pontus, Galatia, and Cappadocia, he urges them to maintain solemn public worship, as it seems, in the words, “When ye call on The FATHER . . . pass the time of your sojourning (παροιμία) in fear.” Possibly with like allusion, some Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers are addressed to the “sojourning” Christians of different cities.¹ At first, necessarily, each little community of Christian sojourners in each place, would be undefined by exact territorial land-marks. The persons, and not the place, constituted the “Parish.”

Its spiritual
concentra-
tion.

One rule, with probably few exceptions in those days, was that the Head of each large παροιμία or Parish, should be a consecrated Bishop. The primitive Christians believed in the blessing of the Apostolic guidance and presence of the Bishop with his flock. A Bishop was not regarded *merely* as the channel of Holy Orders, but as the constant guide, adviser, and friend, of the whole Christian flock. This was the Episcopacy of S. Ignatius’s Epistles, and the Apostolic Canons; a kind of Episcopacy worth believing in. There was nothing merely “technical or formal” in this: it was the life-blood of the primitive System. The Bishop was the spiritual monarch of the Christian people; he reigned in their hearts. Such were the earliest beginnings of the Spiritual Hierarchy—such the manner in which the Apostles, unless they mistook the mind of the SPIRIT, set up His spiritual kingdom among men. Of the spiritual society so created, every Christian was a member; and subject to its laws: and while it so continued, unallied with earthly governments, unsupported by

¹ S. Polycarp ad Philip.—Ecl. Smyrn. Ep., &c.

earthly sanctions, and claiming as a *body* no earthly rights, its spiritual jurisdiction might remain unchallenged, though its subjects might be persecuted.

But the time came, when this state of things must needs be modified. The first gift of land in perpetuity (for example) to the Christian body, would bring about *some* settling of the mutual rights of the spiritual and civil powers. This was a question that could not be avoided. In one form or other, it was sure to arise, sooner or later. The Church's acceptance of earthly property, or rights, as a Church, placed it under earthly law; for a purely spiritual independence could only be claimed by those who made no claim on the state for earthly privileges, maintainable by the laws of men. It was, however, but by slow degrees that the Church grew from a purely spiritual, to a mixed jurisdiction. In the first days of the faith, and while the government of the world, territorially, was in Pagan hands, the Church *could* not do more than she did, in CHRIST's Name, in commanding and ruling His *people*. Therefore no conclusion hostile to any subsequent compact of the spiritual and temporal powers can be deduced from primitive example; neither on the other hand any conclusion inconsistent with the actual exercise of hierarchical power in any particular form or degree, from the fact of the narrow limits of the primitive jurisdiction. Take all the circumstances, and the Church did all that was possible then, to carry out the idea of a sacred government of men on earth. She taught them obediently to rally round their centre, or Bishop, and conform their practice to the laws of the Divine SPIRIT speaking in her holy assemblies. To the Bishop alone, the "watching for their souls" was given: he alone was, (so to say,) the "parish priest,"

Limit of
spiritual in-
dependence.

having the sole spiritual "cure." To him, having indeed no earthly lands, or legally secured possession for the Church, the Christian people sent their offerings "which they laid by on the first day of the week"; and he gave alms to CHRIST's poor, and supported his Præsbyters. All the sacred jurisdiction of the Society of Christians, in each place, was thus administered by the Bishop, acting often in Council, but at times also delegating authority to others for special works. The Sacraments were to be administered in the Church as far as possible by the Bishop himself: and the strictest account was kept in his church-roll of all CHRIST's people there. (*Apost. Can.*)

A Primitive
Bishop.

Behold then, ere we pass on to far other times, a Bishop of the second and third centuries! He is the ruler, the parish priest, the confessor and adviser of all the Christians within his reach; whose names he knows, and whose families he baptizes—whose sins he corrects—whose sorrows he shares—whose missionary teachers he pays—to whose wants, if there are poor, he ministers, from the common fund in his charge. His parish is not so much land; but all the baptized people within reach of him, (not subject to any other Bishop,) having their names in his book. This you will say was evidently a provisional state of things only: the infancy of Christianity, which it could not fail to outgrow. Granting, perhaps, that it was so: yet it was founded on principles which it would *never* outgrow.

Enlarge-
ment of the
Church.

It was inevitable, for example, sooner or later, that the Christians in the neighbourhood of any active Bishop would in time become too numerous for his personal superintendence. Here was a vital difficulty; because in the very idea of a Christian Bishop was then

involved this "superintendence," or "oversight." He was the centre of his people—clergy and laymen. He was at once the symbol and the means, of the Unity of the whole Body. Hence the strong sayings of S. Ignatius. Not only were the Christians one community in one place, because surrounding and receiving all blessing from their one Apostolically-descended head; but they were intimately connected with all other Churches, by the means of their Bishop, who met the neighbouring Bishops, as has been said, in Provincial Council every half-year. The increase then in the number of Christians, and their flocking together in the same locality, would give rise to the question—what is to be done, to preserve the system of Apostolic Rule, whereby every Christian had constant access to, and blessing from, his Bishop, and adhered personally to him as the Ambassador of CHRIST, acting in His name?

The first and most natural thought would be, the increase of the number of Bishops, and subdividing the original "parish" of each. This was sometimes done; but there was a difficulty in this plan, which probably prevented its being adhered to uniformly. The parish of the original Bishop of any place would have been formed very gradually, not exactly by territorial additions (at least in our modern sense,) but by the ingathering of Christian souls, scattered in their various dwellings, here and there, all around; and countless practical difficulties would arise, as to the dividing of such a jurisdiction as this, which might engender a total breaking up of those solemn ties of allegiance and obedience, and gratitude, on which the Unity of the whole Body so much depended. Often and often it would be absolutely necessary to refrain from alto-

Subdivision
of Episco-
pate.

gether subdividing an ancient Episcopate; lest dismemberment of the Body should ensue. Then it must be remembered that the multiplication of the Christian society was a matter of growing uneasiness to the heathen; which made caution in the Christian Rulers all the more important. The persecutions of the Christians had already produced one effect, of mingled good and evil: they had been more widely scattered, and therefore were less of a "body" to the eye of the world, though more "leavening to the whole" of the empire.

The Parochial
Presbyterate.

In the midst of this state of things, gradually the system began more and more to prevail, of the Bishop appointing a fixed representative of himself, in certain matters, a Presbyter only; having a portion of the Bishop's jurisdiction, and holding it under him, and exercising it at his pleasure, in the locality where the Bishop fixed him; and for this there was Apostolic pattern from the first, in principle. Henceforth this local subdivision of Christians came to be called a "parish," and the Bishop's parish, which included many of these Presbyters' parishes, was soon known by a distinct name—a Diocese. Still it was found very difficult to carry out the regulations of the Canons of the Church, under this arrangement of the Apostolic plan, with that strictness which was desired; as the history of the times, the Councils and Decrees, will fully show. Then the jealousy of the Pagans was a great check on the local supervision of Christians; and the activity of heresy was also another source of trouble. At this juncture, it pleased Divine Providence to interfere.

Need of
Territorial
Possession.

The Church (be it observed) had at this period carried out (to use a human phrase) to the utmost of her power, under her circumstances, the Divine idea of a Hierarchy, a sacred Government of men united in

One Body, on holy principles and for holy ends, distinct from the world. More could not be done, perhaps, to extend CHRIST'S Law, and preserve Unity, in the position then occupied by the Church, or with the means apparently at her service. Large and growing communities, uncircumscribed by very exact locality, became less and less subject to rule, and more and more open to heretical and schismatical invasion. Paganism, with its wide-spreading, and often shattering, persecutions; and Arianism, with its manifold subtilities and blasphemies, could with difficulty be confronted with the required unity and steadiness. Councils, though more numerous, were often difficult to assemble. Another element seemed wanted for the time, to enable the Church to complete her divine model of a sacred Hierarchy, a Jerusalem of the Spirit and not the letter, a city at unity in itself. Territorial possession and peace seemed to be that want.

Constantine's succeeding to the Empire, after the overthrow of his rival, was the beginning of another era. On the State becoming Christian, however, the exercise of the Jurisdiction of the Church was not stopped. Nor was it, as some might desire, transferred to the State: (the language of the President of the Nicene Council, to Constantine himself,¹ is plain as to this;) yet it was no longer *purely* spiritual. Parishes, Dioceses, and Patriarchates, often imitating and following the arrangements of the Empire itself, had precise limits locally assigned; in city after city, province after province. The Church acquired property and rights under the earthly power.—Whether, in all respects, the Church made then the right terms with

Accession of
Constantine.

¹ See Lectures on the Succession; p. 26. Also, S. Athanasius, Ep. ad. Sol. pp. 861, 862.

the Civil power, is not now the question ; but whoever would compare nearly the 30 years following the Nicene Council, with the 30 preceding, will see the immediate success that attended the first setting up of this public manifestation of the Church, in re-establishing the broken unity in a large degree, reforming practical corruptions, and enforcing the LAWS of CHRIST.

The Church's gradual acceptance of earthly rights.

Of course the territorial arrangements of the Church, could not be all accomplished at once ; the parochial subdivision gradually went on increasing. In thinly populated districts, or places where Christians were still but few, the Primitive plan still prevailed, of a Bishop being the Incumbent of one Parish only, with his Priests around him, at his own Altar where he served, acting under him and for him. Though the assigning of a Church and its people to a single Presbyter, with delegated jurisdiction, began 50 years before Constantine, it had not become at all fixed and universal until the seventh century, at earliest. Up to that period, very frequently the "Parish" means the Diocese of a Bishop, and the grant of jurisdiction to Presbyters was more partial. All the Penitential Canons, for 600 years and more, imply, that the power of receiving all confessions of offending Christians, and giving absolutions from censure, even as it is called in "foro interno," remained with the BISHOP. But after the seventh century, this latter was conceded to Parish Priests ; and thenceforward the Penitential Canons seem to suppose this.

And conforming to subdivisions of the state.

The Fourth General Council of the Church, that of Chalcedon, by its 17th Canon desired that the Church should, as much as possible, conform to the territorial divisions of the State. Immediately the Religion of CHRIST was acknowledged by the Roman Empire, the

system which the Church had, under the Spirit's guidance, laboured from the first to accomplish, was certainly in some things carried out with a precision and perfectness unknown before. The Empire itself was divided into four Prefectures, that of the East, of Illyricum, of Italy, and of Gaul and Africa. Within these Prefectures, there were 13 Civil Dioceses, and 120 Provinces. The Church imitated this division and subdivision. Constantinople, having been made the Imperial City, had the distinction of being also a Patriarchal City, and thus there were four great Patriarchates; (beside the small Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which was preserved out of reverence.) The literary importance of Alexandria having partly subsided, that See now no longer, as at first, took any lead among Christians. Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch, were henceforth the grand divisions of the Christian Hierarchy.

Let it not be supposed, however, that the Patriarchs and Metropolitans of early times, pretended to any semi-papal or *jure divino* power over their brethren, the Bishops of the Catholic Church. They were of Ecclesiastical origin, and built solely on Ecclesiastical right, in all their superiority or special function. Canons of Councils created, for wisest ends, these various ranks in the one Episcopacy, fixed their limits, and defined their powers. Each Bishopric was complete in itself, and in one sense equal to every other, though subject in various degrees by the Christian Canons to the Provincial, and ultimately to Œcumenical Law, which was promulgated in Synod.

The Council of Chalcedon having conformed the Christian polity, as far as practicable, to that of the Empire, in all its various local divisions; it only

The Episcopate only regarded as "*jure divino*."

The State ultimately recognises this.

seemed to be required for the consolidation of the system, that the Empire should show a like spirit towards the Church. This was done by the act of the Emperor Justinian, which incorporated the code of the Universal Church, as fixed at Chalcedon, in the formal body of the Roman Law. Of the wisdom, in all respects, of this close alliance of the Spiritual and Civil Jurisdictions, and of its results also, I must not be wholly reserved in speaking.

Mixed
results.

From the first moment of the friendship of Constantine showing itself towards Christianity, the Church, anxious to remedy present evils, was too eager for that friendship; and there was a lower ground taken than the law of CHRIST demanded. Look back, and somewhat closely into the case. Is it conceivable that S. Paul would have allowed Nero (Emperor in his time,) to do what the Nicene Bishops allowed Constantine at once to do? Suppose Nero had sent a message to the Apostle, that he was induced to receive Christianity; would S. Paul's bosom have fluttered with expectation at the royal convert, as in fact, the heart of the whole Christian community did at the accession of Constantine? Would he have permitted Nero, as yet unbaptized, to direct the Apostles, not only when and where they should meet in Council, but also as to the arrangements of Churches and Dioceses? and sit in the Synod of Apostles by his own right, as Emperor, even when not yet really Christian? Or would he have sent a simple message to him, "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins?" I venture to say, what every Christian mind will feel, that if the imperial proselyte refused the Apostle's terms, Repentance and Baptism, the Apostle would have never consented even to receive him in the Christian Society; much

less would he have allowed him to regulate and direct his Apostolical duties and functions. I am not indeed denying that by God's mercy, good was brought out of evil ; but I am saying, that the Church's course was not what it should have been : and it found this, full soon. History tells of it, from that day to this. The Arian son of Constantine soon scourged the Church for her worldly submissions to his more orthodox father.

An establishment which should have protected Christianity from persecution, and allowed the Church free action, and her sons free permission to have and hold temples for God's worship, and free permission to exercise all rights of civil citizenship, might have been accepted without sin in the first place, and could not have been denied by a genuine Christian Emperor. All further strengthening of the Church, or "establishing," should have *followed* by the increase of the ranks of Christians ; for every man, from the Emperor downward, would, if Christian, have had to use all his powers and opportunities, as matter of bounden duty, to promote CHRIST's cause on earth. But the course actually taken was fearfully different. Constantine was allowed to patronize the Church of his LORD and SAVIOUR ; instead of being told with honesty to forget his purple and his crown, for one brief hour, and submit to be baptized in CHRIST's name, and henceforth act as his lowly follower, fulfilling all the injunctions of his word. Hosius, (as we have said) the President at Nicæa, perceived from the first, the error of submitting to the Emperor's interference in holy things, and remonstrated to his face, in the tone and with the authority of a Paul : and Ambrose later. But the stand was not made by the Church as a body ; and henceforth the struggle

Imperial
patronage ;
and relaxa-
tion of the
Canons.

between the heavenly and the earthly principles, was pursued at a disadvantage. The Church, instead of *enlarging* herself, went forth in eagerness to possess the nations, in the same way as she possessed their Emperor. The sanctity of the institute was soon really abated, the Laws Divine relaxed, to admit the flocking converts. A shadow of Christianity thus stalked through the nations, so impalpable, at times, that often it scarcely altered the hue of the solid Paganism, that then existed and shone through it.—Brethren, if we will confess to ourselves the truth, the choice could only in such days lie between a genuine, and exclusive, and holy Church, and a semi-Christianized world; and so far as the Church relaxed the laws of CHRIST, to make them conformable to earth, she forgot her true position as a Heavenly Polity.

“Imperium
in Imperio,”

It was never indeed intended by God that the Kingdom of CHRIST should be absorbed in, and identified with, any earthly kingdom or power. “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” This was CHRIST’S separation of things temporal and things eternal. So also His Apostles allowed no interference with the Church, as such, but said “whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto men more than unto God, judge ye.” Granting, too, that often the Church and the world’s authorities might come into collision; still we cannot call this a “difficulty.” In one sense an “*imperium in imperio*” is the very theory of CHRIST’S religion.¹ It sets up a holy government and holy authorities in an unholy world—“the Kingdom of

¹ See the Emperor Constantine’s letter to the Council of Arles: (and that to the Bishops assembled at Antioch; quoted in Burnet’s *Regale*, &c., p. 31. Theod. liv. c. 6, 7.

Heaven," on earth. If this be a difficulty, as in some sense it is, it is a difficulty which can only be solved when the end cometh, and CHRIST shall "put down all rule and authority, and power, and deliver up the Kingdom to GOD, even the FATHER; and GOD be all in all."

To turn, then, for a moment to the opposite view of the question before us: let us not overlook that it was a really difficult matter to decide in detail—and only in detail did it come to a slow decision—what kind of recognition the civil government ought to give of the Church's laws, after the Government had become Christian. The further Christianity spread the deeper interest did the State acquire in it, for the deeper did it strike its roots into all the institutions of the life of man on earth; and this should not be, without some distinct understanding as to the respective rights of the temporal and the spiritual governments, in regulating all things of a mixed nature in human life, and not purely spiritual. Hence the inevitable, lawful, rightful, prerogative of the State, to a voice in matters of mixed spiritual rule; and even a predominant voice in some things, *i. e.* a Supremacy. The consistent denier of the Supremacy of the Law of the State in subject-matters of earthly right, is an anarchist or a "fifth Monarchy man." And in spite of all scoffs, we are fearless in saying, what no reasoner will deny, that in the true doctrine of the "Supremacy of the Crown," as it is called among us, there is nothing more than a necessary fact asserted, true everywhere alike; the Supremacy of the State, —the Supremacy of the Law. (*See Appendix No. II.*)

When CHRIST gave to His Church Hierarchical powers, it was for purely spiritual ends. Possessions—immunities—rights of earth—courts of law, upheld by penal

"Supremacy."

"Submission to the ordinance of man."

rigors of the earthly magistrate ; all these, CHRIST gave not; and whether rightly or wrongly allied to the Church of CHRIST, are really under the protection of the State. The highest spiritual officer, the instant he accepts one rood of land—any one earthly right—one that he cannot purely hold and maintain by spiritual and supernatural means alone—that instant he so far places himself under the authority of the earthly power, and he must “submit to the ordinance of man for the LORD’s sake.” The not passing the lawful limits of this submission, constitutes the trial of the Church in every age. It is too late to inquire whether the Church ought to have placed herself exactly in this position. God’s Providence has decided that, as far as the present generation is concerned ; and if it be, as some have said, that we are less free than was our spiritual birth-right—and if greater freedom were offered in God’s Providence we might “use it rather”—yet must we do our duty while abiding in that state “in which we are called.” It is no impracticable attempt.

Effects on
the Episco-
pate.

One mournful consequence must, however, be pointed out, in connexion with the subject of this Lecture, as resulting partly from the Church’s alliance with the world, and partly from the assignment more and more, after the Fourth General Council, of the Spiritual Government and local “cure of souls” to priests only.¹ In proportion as the Bishop devolved

¹ Dupin is of opinion that there were no country parishes before the fourth century. In the time of Pope Cornelius, however, there were not fewer than forty-six parishes (according to Baronius) in Rome. In England, Blackstone asserts, (Com. i. 113.) that they were early endowed by the lords of the manors ; but there is little recognition of them before the laws of Edgar, (A. D. 970,) though Camden attributes the division to Archbishop Honorius. (A. D. 630.)

parochial cares on the Priest, (necessary and wise as this was, and divinely ordered doubtless,)—yet there arose a danger and temptation to the Bishop. He became in some sense less priestly. (Evil mysteriously rises thus to thwart what is so holy and good!) There was a temptation for the Bishop to become absorbed (and in mediæval times he was so) in “governing” instead of “feeding his flock like a shepherd, gathering his lambs in his arms, and carrying them in his bosom.” CHRIST’s injunction, “Feed My sheep”—“Feed My lambs,”—was left to be fulfilled by deputy; and “I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom,” was well nigh every thing.

Nor was the “power of the keys” in such wise put forth, as if the whole body of the Christian people were to be governed by the Episcopate; but chiefly the Clergy and the religious orders. Equally against this kind of unfaithfulness in the Hierarchy, (as, on the other hand, against Roman usurpations) stand such canons as the thirty-ninth of the African code; “*Ut primæ sedis Episcopus non appellatur princeps sacerdotum, aut summus sacerdos, aut aliquid hujus modi.*” Far was such a Hierarchy from the sublime function of leading men (as says Dionysius)¹ to be conformed to the Deity; far from showing² that “*Episcopi in Ecclesiâ tenent locum Domini nostri JESU CHRISTI.*” The Spiritual power of Excommunication, the special instrument which CHRIST gave His Church to restrain the overflowings of ungodliness,—that which was so sacredly reserved as the peculiar right of the Bishop

Excommu-
nication.

¹ Pontificum ordo primus quidem est divinarum ordinationum sublimissimus autem et novissimus: et enim in ipsam perficitur et impletur omnis nostræ Hierarchiæ dispositio. Eccl. Hierar. c. 5.

² S. Thos. Aquinas, Opusc. 16.

alone, (acting under the laws of the Church)—how was it “delegated” from hand to hand, and mixed with all that was “of the earth, earthy”; until it well nigh passed from the observance of man, that this was a Divine and awful gift of power to the Episcopate, for the continual purging of the “kingdom of heaven” on earth! The “greater Excommunication,” which was a total exclusion from the Church’s pale—the “minor,” which suspended from the Sacraments,—instead of issuing forth, in sad extremities, personally from the Father of the Spiritual family—were left to be proceeded with by appointed functionaries, according to the graceless forms of a semi-secular system, alien surely from the “mind of the Spirit” of CHRIST!

How to be
remedied.

The first remedy of this fearful evil should have been the subdividing of dioceses—whenever the number of Christians multiplied so as to make episcopal knowledge of them impossible. Would to God that this remedy had been amply resorted to! Then had not Bishops been able to imitate the ambition and so excite the envy of the world; then had the *Church* been and felt itself “episcopal” as well as the *Hierarchy*; the people, conscious that submission and duty was owing from them to their Bishop, as truly as from the Clergy. It is a common argument, with some, that thus to multiply Bishops would have tended to “impair the Church’s UNITY.” There never was made use of a more Romanizing argument. Every reason for large Episcopates (founded on *this* ground,) might be consistently carried out into Popery; and many of the strongest reasons urged against the setting up of one Visible Head, or Pope, would tell equally against large episcopates. And on the other hand most of the objections to episcopacy, or its

extension, would be set aside, if Bishops had retained their primitive proportions. The world would not have reason to be jealous of such Bishops; and the Church would know and love, and rejoice in them.

I ask any one to look over the Canons of the primitive Church and see what they evidently suppose the Bishop to be; even the very centre, essence, and life of the Christian system; and I think that every one will own that the episcopate has developed in many respects into something very different. It is not indeed our own misfortune alone—that our Bishoprics are large enough to be provinces with Archbishops at their head. The continental Churches share it with us; only they with their overgrown Dioceses are consistent, and we are not. For they do not even strictly call themselves “Episcopal,” but “Papal.”

Primitive
ideas of
Episcopacy.

All holy Bishops have, for ages now, been accustomed to bewail, as did holy Bishop Wilson, of Sodor and Man, the difficulty of restoring discipline, or enforcing the Canons of the Church. And why? He felt it even in his Diocese of, I think, 100,000 souls—but in such enormous Dioceses as we often see, the personal blessing of the Bishop’s influence is unknown to three Christians out of four. The very end and object of Christianity, the personal government of souls for CHRIST—the aiding and directing of human probation in this world, on Christian principles and by Christian Canons—is greatly frustrated, because the task assigned to each Prelate, however great, holy, and active he be, is as impossible to him, as the task he assigns to his presbyters is to them. If any one pretends that the Christian Hierarchy was intended by its Divine Founder to terminate in being one large Bishopric on earth, embracing one whole mass of

Restoration
of the per-
sonal in-
fluence of
the Bishop.

baptized, unsuperintended souls, he is asserting what the Papists, practically at least, also assert; and making every Bishop, little more than we make the presbyter,—viz., the *delegate* of a higher earthly power. But, for *us*, who believe that episcopacy is a reality—it remains that we cease not to strive to make it *felt* as such, and brought home as such, to every member of CHRIST. This can only be achieved by such a multiplication of dioceses as never yet entered the scheme of any Church reformer of this age.

Example of
the Diocese
of Sodor and
Man.

And yet, who shall dare to say that the thought is Utopian, that English Bishoprics should be again at least what Bishop Wilson's was a hundred years ago? That holy man, that "burning and shining light," was surely not sent to us for nothing. His godly discipline—his primitive piety—his solemn zeal—how shone they, by God's permission, in his island See for half a century! If we are tempted to despair of primitive revivals, and deem spiritual jurisdiction but a name, and sanctity a dream, let our eyes and hearts once more turn to that beacon light which, so near our very shores, beamed gloriously, only a generation since, and whose glowing embers have not yet gone out!

POSTSCRIPT

TO

LECTURES I. AND II.

Of Dispensations and Indulgences.

A DIFFICULTY will, to many, appear to lie in the statement more than once made in the two preceding Lectures—that Episcopal Jurisdiction can only be rightly exercised in accordance with the Canons of the Church. “Is it not certain that at all times the enforcement of the Canons has been a grave difficulty; and a relaxation of some, and a dispensation as to others, been inevitable?” This subject should not be carelessly dismissed: it concerns Roman, and Greek, no less than Anglican Churchmen.

IN the Roman Church, not only is the discipline of the ancient Synods superseded by modern practices in almost all respects; but even the Discipline of their own Council of Trent is but imperfectly admitted any where. In the Eastern Church, the primitive code is more respected; but certainly not practically acted on, among either those of the Patriarch’s, or those of the Pope’s obedience. In the Anglican Church the decay of discipline of the primitive model is solemnly acknowledged with anxious prayers to GOD, and desire for its restoration. ^{Dispensations.}

Such being the state of the Universal Church of GOD with respect to its Synodical Laws, what can the principle mean, that Jurisdiction is to be canonically regulated by the Church in Synod?

First then: It is never to be supposed for a moment, that the essence of jurisdiction itself is *derived* from the Synod, as such. It is derived from CHRIST Himself: it exists in the Episcopate; and is inherent in it so fully, that in any extreme emergency, *the Church has ever held*, that the Bishop of any Church is, for the time, all-sufficient for the formal government of the faithful. This has been acted on, in every age, and in every part of the Church.

This principle alone will explain how the Church of the West subsisted in the centuries between the Sixth General Council, and the Council of Constance. The Decretum of Gratian, the great Canonical authority in the Church of Rome, was indeed an attempt to remedy the evil of the discordancy of the law and the practice of the Church : an evil which had become more and more notorious from the time of the Collection of Dionysius Exiguus. Nor can it be pretended that Pontifical infallibility supplied the defects of the times, in Churches frequently without communications of any kind with Rome, and to whom its dispensing power (even had it been thought of in Rome itself,) was never in any way made known. If Bishops were not, vitally and inherently, sufficient for the needs of the Church in the mediæval times, the Church ceased to exist in Northern Europe ; which no one has ever affirmed.

Secondly. Whoever will look into the Code of the Universal Church, will be compelled to the conclusion, that it not only was never in all things acted on at any time ; but perhaps never capable, as a whole, of being so *all at once*, or in all respects ; even if generally. The later decrees frequently supersede the earlier ; (as the Fourteenth Council of Nicæa overrules the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth of Ancyra.) And some have been merely "dead letters," *ab initio*,—(as the Twentieth of Nicæa, almost in all the West ;) and from the way in which the Church herself thus dealt with her own decrees, we may learn that Synodical decisions were not inexorable rules, unbending and fixed, and to be administered mechanically. While laying down rules for her Bishops and people as declarations of the Church's will and principles, and mainly as preservatives of a right mutual understanding, and as general principles to be aimed at by the Episcopacy ; every where the Councils themselves were in the habit of pre-supposing, and so acknowledging, the independent action of Bishops, to a large extent ; and only correct this in cases where evil proved to result from particular Bishops overruling the canons. (Nicæan C. 15.)

Thirdly. The principle of *trusting her Bishops* individually, which is a fundamental principle of the Canon Law, is that on which the Church proceeds at all times between one Council and another : (just as now among Romanists, the Pope is conceived to have adequate powers during the cessation of the sessions, or in the absence of the voice, of a General Council). The Church may withdraw this trust, but when obliged to do it, she does it by a formal act : the deposition, and degradation of a Bishop by his brethren. No

doubt it is a grave evil if at any time the Bishops of a province are restrained, or hindered, from proceeding against an heretical Bishop. The extent to which the Church Universal delighted to trust her Bishops, even individually, is of course not to be our precise rule when its chief safeguard is at any time removed: its chief safeguard being their mutual awe of each other, and the power of deposition lodged in the Synod. In primitive days, for example, though the Church in setting forth the creeds to be received, prohibited the making of new creeds—the prohibition was not meant to interfere with the discretion of Bishops as to their own Churches: provided they kept within the bounds of orthodoxy: of which at any time the Synod would judge. Thus the different “Symbols” or creeds came to be often called after the name of the particular Episcopate for which they had been drawn up by the Bishop himself. Of course the Church did not place such unlimited trust in any Bishop in a matter of doctrine as in discipline. Yet there was a trust, even as to the doctrine. Hence the various symbols “of Rome,” “of Alexandria,” “of Jerusalem,” “of Aquileia,” &c.; and so, for example, the Third and following General Councils did not condemn Theodore of Mopsuestia for merely drawing up a Creed. Had he been far less esteemed than he was in his day, as a learned and holy expositor, he would not have been restrained for this, (how much so ever the practice might seem to be against the synodical laws, *Con. Eph. Can. 7*); but it was because his creed was “contrary to the Catholic Faith,” the fathers condemned it.

Fourthly. It being admitted thus on all hands, that there lives in the Church a Dispensing Power, ever capable of acting, exerted in various ways, at various times, in respect of laws formally unrepealed; the only real question between ourselves and other Churches in this matter, would be as to where the Dispensing Power ordinarily resided? We say that the Church trusts her Bishops: (*Gangra, Can. 6, 7.*) the Doctors of the Canon Law, and all the ancients, concede that a Spiritual Dispensing Power, in ordinary cases of discipline, resides in the Bishops; subject herein, according to some moderns, to the ultimate approval of the Pope—or, according to the ancients, to the Church in Synod, vindicating or relaxing her own laws. And not the least important of the distinctions of the Canonists, is that between “tacit” and “express” dispensations. Dispensation is held to be an act of Jurisdiction in either case, and results from inherent power in the Episcopate, howsoever that power is regulated or restrained by law.

“Episcopi semper dispensant, ubicumque a jure permittitur in genere, licet specificè non permittitur, Episcopis.” This is an ultra-Roman admission ; but the Council of Trent is express (Sess. xxiv. c. 6) as to some cases ; and, notwithstanding the “*Bulla Cœnæ*,” the general law of the Church, even in the Roman Communion, concedes to Bishops in all cases of “necessity,” “urgency,” “prescript custom,” or “considerable doubt,” the exercise of this “*potestatem ordinariam Episcoporum*.” *Ferraris, in loco.*

Celibacy.

LET this be illustrated by an example : the primitive laws respecting the marriage of the Clergy. There is no doubt, that the Western Church (except ourselves) *exceed* the strictness of the ancient Canons, in such a measure, as to be even incompatible at times with their very spirit. The rigid and awful celibacy of the Latins, clashes altogether with the Apostolical Canons ; as viz., the fortieth, which says, “*it may be that the Bishop has a wife or children ;*” or the fifty-first, which would depose a Bishop, if he “abstain from marriage, as abhorring it, (forgetting that GOD made all things very good, and that HE made man, male and female,) and blaspheming the work of creation.” So also the fourth Canon of Gangra, equally adopted into the code of the Universal Church, enacts, “If any one asserts concerning a married Presbyter, that it is not lawful to partake of the oblation when he offers, let him be anathema.” We, in England, have departed in an opposite direction, from all observance of the laws which put a distinction between lay and sacerdotal marriages. The Eastern Church having also a married parochial priesthood, takes a middle course, founded on the thirty-fourth Canon of the Council in Trullo, and more in harmony with the ancient code, than either the Latin practice or ours. No Canonists would deny, that the present variations from the ancient rules, are such as *Dispensations would fully cover*, if truly obtained by adequate authority ; and we doubt not that the local Church is adequate, judging of its own necessities, in the absence of the Œcumenical Synod.

Discipline generally.

INDEED, in matters of discipline, not touching the faith, the primary responsibility (if not all of it) would rest with the Governors of the Church in every place. That some departures from the Canons, would be wholly beyond the power of a local Church, and unjustifiable, is not to be denied. It is some protection however, when from any cause in GOD’s providence, the Bishops of a province are

obliged to act together so that they cannot touch "the Faith," but only the discipline of the Church.

Multitudes of examples of departure from the ancient laws, of course, might be adduced on all hands; and those, too, regarding the most ordinary matters. Thus, the eleventh Canon of Neocesarea fixes thirty as the age for ordination to the priesthood. The Canonical age now is twenty-four.—The sixty-third Apostolical Canon, continues the old legal prohibition of blood;—the forty-sixth speaks like St. Cyprian against heretical Baptism, &c.—And no rule unrepealed, (except those respecting *FASTS*) has been more flagrantly set at nought by some, than that very primary one, (Ap. Can. 1.) of "three Bishops" being required to unite in Episcopal consecrations: standing, as it does, at the very threshold of the Canons, as if a prophetic protest against the Roman theory of *UNITY*; (of which see *Appendix, No. I.*)

After all, it must be mournfully acknowledged that the departure from the Canons, the decay of godly discipline, the cessation of penances, the ease of indulgences, (as for example, the facility of marriage by licence, instead of banns, among us) and manifold "tacit" dispensations, are the now crying evil of the whole Church, yea, of the whole lawless age in which we live. Nevertheless it seems undeniable, that in respect of all Church laws, the responsibility of *DISPENSATIONS*, for the time being, practically lies with the Bishops. On this principle the 9th Canon of Pisa, in 1406, validates all Episcopal Dispensations during the troubles. I fear that our "Acts of Uniformity" do not recognise any such dispensing power; yet so far as it belongs inherently to the Episcopacy, it is not *abrogated* by any earthly statutes. Nor can the extent and magnitude of our tacit suspension of the Canons, be with much consistency upbraided by Romanists, recollecting their own "Jubilees," and wholesale dispensations—the very terms of their indulgences being frequently such as scarcely to preserve a semblance of discipline, and only framed with a view to a systematic or theoretical consistency: hence they are drawn out into less and less, with a sad and undisguised attempt to get as *much* obedience as the religious will give, and yet accept as *little* as the irreligious will compound for,—even one single "paternoster." Surely our mere "tacit" Dispensations are to be preferred to these bold attempts to justify the laxity of the age, and say, "peace, peace, when there is no peace." Our Ash-Wednesday Lament is better than unblushing "Jubilees," the periodical "indulgences," or "acts of indemnity," of a power too weak to insist on its own laws.

LECTURE III.

THE PARISH.

FROM THE EPISTLE.¹

“MOREOVER, IT IS REQUIRED IN STEWARDS THAT A MAN BE FOUND FAITHFUL.”—1 COR. III. 2.

WE have spoken thus far of the Church of CHRIST as His “Kingdom”; which is its description in almost all His parables. But its Jurisdiction is not only of the extensive and comprehensive kind which that name would import; and therefore other, more familiar, and less lofty, metaphors of its dominion, and power, and grace, are also furnished by our LORD, and His Apostles; implying a minuteness and carefulness, as to the details of life and human action, which the word “kingdom” does not imply. Our text contains one such term: CHRIST’S Ministers are “stewards” in His house.

Jurisdiction
not merely
general.

The description of the kind of jurisdiction exercised by the Apostles themselves, recorded in the New Testament, will show how their regulation of Christian affairs descended to minor, and general matters of Christians, (Acts iv. 37.) when “laid at their feet.” The parables of CHRIST had taught this also. The SON OF MAN is as an absent Lord, “who gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work,

¹ Third Week in Advent.

and commanded the porter to watch." "Who then is that faithful and wise servant, whose Lord hath made him ruler over his house, to give them their portion of meat in due season? (and, see Acts vi. 1—5.) Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh shall find so doing." This is the Apostle's thought in the text: "Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." CHRIST'S Church, if spoken of as having the spiritual rule over men by authorized officers and their deputies, is fitly called a "kingdom"; but for the minuteness of its arrangement and care of the most subordinate moral details of the life of man on earth, it may even be described as a "household."

Here, first and in reference to ourselves as a Church, Our need of guidance. I must not hesitate to dwell yet more distinctly on this greatest of all the present needs of Christians—practical and everyday guidance. The deficiencies and evils of other Churches are not so much *our* concern now. We are constantly reminded, and often in the most mournful way, of the fact, that in this age of growing earnestness in all things, many of the most devoted of our own Church's sons have departed from her. Rightly or wrongly they have persuaded themselves that the Church of their fathers would not, or could not, direct their moral and spiritual course, sympathize with their strivings, or help their weakness. We, on the other hand, do, in the sight of their FATHER and ours, and in behalf of our common Mother the Church of England, most steadfastly allege that their fretful spirits have been misled and overwrought, and that there is guidance with us, for all who *will* be led; and none others, by the very condition of moral agency, can be aided by us. I dare not say, indeed, that all is done, that our Church desires, and her men-

bers need. Very far from it. But I allege that the Church's system, though dormant, is not dead; and it will be her people's sin if they rouse it not into active life. I am not about to affirm that the "Parochial system" of the nineteenth century, with its active ruling Priest, and sometimes assistant Curate, and well-pewed rate-payers, its two or three Scripture Readers for the poor, and cheap Monitor-school for their children, and tracts, and local "charities," is the true development of the mind of the Spirit in the Church; nor that, amidst all our self-deluding decencies and apologies, though mixed with realities, the anxious and inquiring souls of this generation find abundant guidance. But I would say that, when an Incumbent-Priest among us receives a "charge in the Lord" from his Bishop—the cure of souls and "government of the Church and Parish,"¹ saving only the rights of the Bishopric," something *real* is surely intended and done. A system, I say, there is latent, which ought to be everywhere in full action among us. That is the parochial system which must be revived: the system of the Canons and Rubrics; the system of all our formal acts as a Church. It is an awful thing to tamper with that system, as it *has* been tampered with. If it be in truth interwoven with the very structure of the Revelation to us in CHRIST, who shall say how far the loss or mutilation of the one may not be practically involved in the other?

Theory of
Church guidance.

It is certain that man's nature cannot be satisfied, nor his character formed as God would have it, save in that System which was divinely provided from the first for his personal guidance and blessing—God's Church. There is that in the character of every

¹ Such are the words of the "institution" of the Rector of a Parish.

human being, which he has received from the community of his species ; that which he could not have had unless he had been in a community. It is easy to complain against our thus saying, by calling it "vague and undefined"; but a thoughtful student of himself and truth, being aware that the whole of any truth can never be contained in a definition, (which is rather a substitute for it, given to meet the craving of the vulgar) will not set light by the important fact, indefinite though it be, that man becomes such as he is, in consequence of influences, (apart, I mean, from direct education) not of self-origination—influences arising from his living in a community.

This indeed is a practical statement of the case of every succeeding generation, with reference to the theological doctrine of what is called "Original Sin." However it be stated, or explained, the fact remains the same. Man, owing to his very nature as a social moral agent, must, by a subtle process not admitting of analysis, derive a permanent tone and inwrought character from the community in which he exists ; and, if the community be evil, the *influences* are evil, and the man inherits the evil. This implies more than that evil companionship corrupts a man ; which, of course, would be true, in consequence of the power of example. But there are invisible influences, which are not reducible to mere example, which exist for evil or for good in every society as such—influences, not created by one of the society, but, in a measure, by each and all. This is true, in some degree, even in the more restricted circles of human communion ; where we find that, apart from what is precisely said or done, there is so real an influence, that evil men feel quite uncomfortable in the presence of very holy men, and are glad to get away

*Influences of
association.*

from even their looks. And, on the other hand, the virtuous would be in pain if forced to abide in the "tents of wickedness," even though they were kept in external good order the while. So, if we desired thoroughly to elevate the tone of a man, in any respect, we should naturally seek to subject him to the best influences among which we could place him. On the other hand, irreligious people, if they suspect any relations or friends of becoming "too pious," try to get them out of their present tone by subjecting them to other influences in society; without, of course, revolting the objects of their strange anxiety by palpable evil doings. Now this way of acting is founded on a knowledge of human nature.

Individual
convictions
inadequate.

The individual conviction of the mind and the heart will not suffice to form a character, nor permanently influence the life. Is not this the reason, my brethren, why we cannot often succeed in mending our hearers, notwithstanding all that we say in the Name of the LORD? Men listen with interest to what is put before them. They are attracted by the truth as spoken; and they are often and often shaken, in their dreams of worldly security, by any powerful statement of the realities of an hereafter. Their consciences bear witness within them that what the preacher has said is the Truth of God. When he has refused to speak the things that soothe and please, and said "woe unto them that are at ease in Zion": men's hearts have told them that this comes directly to *their* case, and genuinely warns them to begin to change the current of their lives in good earnest. Perhaps some resolution to begin has been half formed; and yet an hour after they have escaped from the influences of the preacher and the church, they have managed to shake

off all they heard, and have thought the Minister of God would have pleased them more, if he had *touched* them less ; or wished that, if he had touched them at all, he had moved some foolish sensibility, and not affected conscience so closely, by talking of the bar of God, the requirements of holiness, and the certainty of judgment to come. Thus the Church's teaching does not tell very extensively. We do not mend many, notwithstanding all their "feelings," and their consciences, and their reason. And why? The answer is plain. We do not get at their influences. This is dreadfully true of all classes ; the highest, the lowest, or, perhaps, most of all, the *middle* class. We can touch them as individuals ; we cannot touch them as social beings. Often we seem to be making way with them, one by one, while we pour into their ears the truths of eternity, and before they have communicated with each other to lower the effect ; but we can do nothing effectually with moral agents, socially constituted, unless we remove them from their present influences, and place them in the midst of other and holier. While things remain as they are, we may indeed preach CHRIST's doctrine of holiness and unworldliness from the pulpit ; but we are secretly regarded by the many as visionaries, and must reckon on being told back again in men's homes that what we say is impracticable.

Now is not all this an awful testimony to the deficiency of our practical, existing Christianity? Men, who are professors of Christianity, do not hesitate to think and say that the Christianity of the Scriptures *cannot* be acted on throughout. They seem positively to prefer the hypothesis that their Blessed LORD was the Teacher of a theoretical perfection, impossible on earth,

Doctrines
insufficient.

to the belief that they have slighted, neglected, and well nigh lost, that part of His Revelation *which alone renders the whole practicable*—that part which suits the means of man's moral amelioration to man's moral character and constitution. Men have been long satisfied to meet doctrine with doctrine; set the blessed doctrine of the Atonement over against the mournful doctrine of Original Sin; and have taken it for granted that a recognition of the Christian doctrines would form the Christian character. Alas! are we for ever to go on thus—losing, as we surely shall (if we do so), all the more earnest and religious of our people, by fallings off to Puritanism, or Popery? No Church can hold on long in this way! God will judge us; and man also.

Need of
Sympathy.

I ask any thoughtful man to reflect, and inquire what chance a youthful being, even in the better classes, has of attaining Scriptural holiness, Christian sanctity, in the present state of the world? He is baptized; and as soon as his intellect develops, he sees around him the various forms of evil; the unchecked passions, the uncontrolled habits of his baptized fellow-men. They think as they please; live as they please; and (in some sense) die as they please; if they only manage to keep within moderate limits of self-indulgence! He goes to church, and hears, once a week perhaps, the elevated lessons of Christian perfection, learned first from his Catechism: and possibly he knows no one, not even his Clergyman, who tries to act on them as if he really believed them to be binding. And is it wonderful that those lessons seem more and more chimerical to him? As he advances in years, and mixes for himself in common society (unchecked as it is by any awful fear of God, or love

of CHRIST,) and as he receives and contributes to its influences, and has to gain his livelihood amidst all the temptations and influences of the existing state of things, is it wonderful that the young mind trained under this system, with little to guide or check him, save individual conscience, and precepts which he regards as less and less practicable, grows into a hardened and impenetrable worldling? I can only say it seems to me that it would often be a moral miracle if it were not so! I candidly own that I can never look on a young person without a melancholy feeling, if a thought of his, or her, probable destiny, in this undisciplined age of the Church comes over my mind. Though doubtless God will judge every case according to its opportunities, powers, temptations, and works, certainly there seems so awful a disproportion between the tremendous requirements of the Christian law of holiness, and the meagre *guidance* of the Christian Church, in the way of holiness, that I know not how the most woeful consequences can be avoided. Even if a man, now-a-days, does begin seriously in religion, and continues awhile; frequents the daily prayer (which Apostles began) and morning by morning faces the early and chilling atmosphere, faces the remonstrances of the worldly, and the suggestions of ease, or the alarms of "health"; then begins to keep the Church's fast-days, and to live resolutely for another world: yet, after a time, he feels that to a great extent he is doing all this by himself! and if he forgets that by himself he will stand at last, and all *alone* be judged, he faints and falls back! He wants sympathy; he wants support. There is no one to warn him personally and instantly, if he flags; no one to upbraid him with authority; no one to receive him if he

returns. Practically he finds that he is his own spiritual adviser—his own censor—his own absolver. And his nature is not made for this ; he cannot endure it ever. Too often, for want of right influences and right sympathies in the Church, the young and ardent will fall back to the world : and the secret of their fall has been that they *could not* stand alone.

Christianity,
social.

Now CHRIST did never design so fearful a trial as this. We inherit, in all our generations, from our first father's fall downwards, all the influences of an unrighteous nature : and Christianity did not and could not undertake to change us, morally and spiritually, without changing the influences of association, under which character and habit must be formed. It undertook to raise men from their moral fall, by setting up a new Society ; bringing men into it, and teaching them to live by its rules. The modern religion of men would fain alter and remould unrighteous characters, while remaining still under all unrighteous influences. Christianity would alter the influences, by making its disciples form a new circle of association. The present unchristian state of the mass of our fellow-men may be adequately accounted for by this alone. Who takes pains with Christian souls ? They have been treated (as has been said) as individuals, and that too but lightly ; and "doctrines" have been administered to them. This plan could not but fail, as it has failed. Does not a new kind of heathenism increase on us ? while modern religionists act like those who should find a man dying in an impoisoned atmosphere, and, instead of removing him to a purer, forthwith, should lay before him food and bid him rise and eat. Man cannot be treated thus, as an "independent" being ; it is wholly contrary to his nature. Amidst holy associations, with holy

restraints, holy guidance, holy supports whereon to lean, he may by CHRIST's mercy, attain to holiness. But until we realize to men the true character of the Church of CHRIST, by restoring the discipline of CHRIST, there lies somewhere an awful responsibility; and let us all see to it!

Would to God, that whatever be the laxities elsewhere, we in England might yet see Christian parishes acting on the law of CHRIST! But as to our present condition, whether we view it in the light of its own theory, or of its practical results, it is most sad to think of it. Few of our Clergy themselves either know or respect, or believe in, their once vaunted "parochial" system. That there are any duties, or sacred ties in parochial matters between Priest and people, is regarded as a strange and unmanageable crotchet of a few dreamers. A dream, alas! it is, to suppose that one ill-defended Priest can singly carry out in his own parish the rules of the Church, which are invaded by all his neighbours. But he is responsible for doing his best. He can warn his brethren, if they break into his fold, with lawless visitations, or ministry, ("stretching itself beyond its measure" of appointed jurisdiction, and "intruding into another man's line of things") as in marrying, churching, examining for confirmation, or baptizing, without leave, in other parishes, they are defying the law they are bound to obey and defend, and teaching their people to scoff at the few remaining relics of "discipline" among us!—breaking the holy command, thinking it "the least," and "teaching men so"; often increasing tenfold the hardships of their spiritual brethren, and making it well nigh impossible for a conscientious parish priest to manage his parish at all! True; "parishes

Our Paro-
chial Condi-
tion.

are too large" now; but will mutual confusions and invasions remedy this? While they remain parishes, the principles on which they were created and alone exist must never be surrendered by those who are "stewards" in God's House. Now, if ever, "it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."

Some change
inevitable.

Surely, I repeat, the present disorder of things can endure among us but little longer. It cannot be that men will go on, in an age like this, without inquiring whether the forms of the system in which they live have any meaning, and if so, *what* meaning? In a few years at farthest, it will be impossible that even honest worldlings will consent to the unrealities of a Church theory, of which the names are the only existing remnants, except in books.¹ Those meetings of our convocations, that mean nothing! Those solemn articles of inquiry of the churchwardens of parishes, year by year sent to them in every diocese—sometimes answered, sometimes not, and now unproductive of all results, and felt on all sides to be but irksome, if not at times trifling; what a solemn witness are they against us! How many have been "presented" according to the canons for a hundred years past? Or think of the fact, that Deacons in many parishes conduct the public worship, and perform many of the holy offices! Or consider what thousands of souls are the "spiritual cure" of one Priest, not a tenth of whom will personally know him, much less be guided by him, while still he is, in name and legal right, the Incumbent of the Parish: can this gigantic evil—an all comprehending one even if alone—be continued thus? They with no sense of allegiance, and he with no felt jurisdiction at all, no "government of the Church in that place," in any moral or spiritual

¹ See "Letter to the Bishop of Exeter, on Church Discipline." 1840.

sense of the term—a stranger to the moral condition of most of the souls whom he “watches over in the LORD!”—The canons of the Church of England will at no distant time be read and thought of by her sons; and the question will be asked, after many, if not each of them, “Does the English Church *mean* this?” And, if so, what will follow? what ought to follow?

I suppose that one of the first questions, with most, Our Canons. would be, what is the *authority* of these canons? Have they the force of law? A most important question, doubtless; yet, not a question so much affecting the theory as the practice of the Church. For whether they are legally binding now, or not, they and all the acts of our Courts Ecclesiastical, founded on them, surely show on what theory our Church proceeded in reforming herself at the time of the suppression of the Papal jurisdiction here. They show that the Church did not intend to sink down into a moral police, for the training of decent citizens for the service of the state; but aims to be a compact society cognizant morally of all its members, and living for eternity, and ruled by the law of CHRIST on earth.

The authority of the canons of the English Church, Subordinate to the Ancient Canon Law. from which we may learn so much of what an English parish is intended by the Church to be, is thus expressed by Blackstone, in his commentaries on the law of England,—“As for the canons enacted by the Clergy, under James I., in 1603, and never confirmed in parliament, it has been solemnly adjudged, upon the principles of the law and the constitution, that where they are not merely declaratory of the ancient canon law, but are introductory of new regulations, they do not bind the laity, whatever regard the Clergy may think proper to pay them.”¹ Probably even the

¹ Vol. I. Inst. f. 3.

Clergy in general will feel that what is thus left, as it were, to their option, needs but little of their regard. But they ought not so to feel in all respects, because a very great part of the book of canons takes for granted the principles of the ancient canon law, and so are (as Blackstone says,) declaratory of it, and so far binding as the canon law is binding. If they set aside all the rest, this exception will still leave us much, and by far the most valuable portion. The authority of the old canon law of England is indisputable, except where express statute¹ has interfered to alter it, or practically set it aside. It is acted on now in all our Ecclesiastical courts. The law of the Church, in spite of that "*Reformatio legum*," so providentially hindered, is now in essentials what it was before Henry VIII. What a Bishop, or Priest, or Parish was in canon law, still continues. The law was not only not taken away, but expressly reserved as to be acted on, subject only to such changes as should afterwards legally be made; changes, I say, which the commission² then appointed to execute were, thank God! prevented from carrying out.

A Parish.

A Christian Parish, according to the canon law of the Church, may be regarded as the third, and final, form of the Christian jurisdiction. The primitive and essential form was that of the Bishop, surrounded by his people; the next gave a definite Locality to his jurisdiction; the third, which we are now considering, assigned a portion of that locality and a portion of that jurisdiction to one incumbent Priest,³ in order to effect a more careful inspection and careful guidance of Christian souls. According to the canons, the Paro-

¹ The Pragmatic Sanction is a similar restraint in France. Indeed, the Statute Law in every State of Europe modifies the Canon Law.

² By 32d Henry VIII.

³ First done in Alexandria.

thus, or Parish-Priest, is but ONE,¹ inasmuch as he represents the Bishop, and bears his authority in a measure, and is called "Sponsus Ecclesiæ Parochialis." The common definition of a Parish is, that it is an "assigned territory having one Ruler to govern and judge the people, and administer to them the Sacraments."² The territory so governed was originally assigned by the Bishop alone.

The spiritual rights of a parish Priest are summarily expressed in the statement, that he has the "whole cure of souls" in his parish, from baptism to the hour of death. The spiritual duties of parishioners are comprehended in that pregnant passage of our own Church Catechism, which bids Christians to "submit themselves to their governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters." These relative rights and duties are defined with much exactness in the canon law, and can in no case be really set aside in this Christian land, except by express statute. It would not be possible in this place to give any analysis of the manifold spiritual ties subsisting between the Incumbent and his parishioners. His countless duties to them, and theirs to him, have to do with every thing in human life which may have any bearing (and what may not?) on human probation. But the jurisdiction of the Parish Priest, or Rector, is exercised, as a general rule, "in foro interno;" and not "in foro externo," which is reserved to the Bishop. The canonists, however, enumerate

The Parish Priest.

¹ It is required, that a parish have "unum, solum, ac perpetuum Rectorem seu Parochum, cum curâ animarum et potestate fori penitentialis ipsi soli competente, ita ut jure ordinario nullus alius sed solus ac unicus Parochus prædictam habeat potestatem."

² "Certus territorii districtus, habens unum Rectorem stabilem cum potestate populum ibidem existentem regendi, et judicandi, &c." Ferraris. *in loc.*

six special rights of the Parish Priest, and duties of his people, more or less connected with, and yet in some degree exceeding his spiritual power: (i.) the baptism of all his parishioners—(ii.) the administration to them of the Easter Communion—(iii.) the ministering to them the last rites of the Church—(iv.) the duties of burial of the dead—(v.) and of holy matrimony—(vi.) and receiving tithes or offerings.

His jurisdiction "in foro interno."

So far, indeed, as the regulations respecting any of these rights of the Parish Church and Priest are connected with, or depend on, the external jurisdiction of the public Christian Courts, the Parochus is subject to the Bishop, who ordinarily acts by his Vicar-General, appointed by him, and removable at his pleasure. Not that Vicars-General may intrude on episcopal functions, in things divine: nor, even though the Vicar-General were himself a Bishop, might he, without special mandate, perform any acts of jurisdiction canonically reserved to the Bishop of the Diocese. But to the Bishop, as such, we must look as the source of the external government of the Christian body. The Priest has that jurisdiction only which is his "in foro interno," by virtue of the "power of the keys," conferred in ordination; and the Priest has a right to exercise that inherent spiritual power only, when he is placed over a Parish for that purpose by the Bishop, as his representative.

Not delegated to his Assistants.

It has followed then, from the nature of the jurisdiction of the Parish Priest, that he has no external power, not even that of excommunication.¹ If he suspends from communion an offending Christian by any formal

¹ Some Canonists assign to the Parish-Priest the power of "Minor Excommunication;" but it is not generally allowed, except *Sub conditione*.—See also, the Council of Lateran, A.D. 1170.

act, he is bound by the canons to inform the Bishop thereof forthwith. Hence, also, the Parish-Priest is able to appoint other Priests, as co-operators and assistants with him, in his parochial work; provided always that they be thereto licensed by the Bishop; and without his "approbation" they may not venture to receive the "confession" of any who would "open to them their spiritual griefs," and obtain from them "the benefit of absolution and ghostly counsel." The work of the Priest is a spiritual work; and wherever the Priestly character exists, it might be validly exercised, by and with the sanction of those who preside in the Church in any place. All Stipendiarii, or assistant Priests, were, by the canons, removable at the will of the Parochus, to whom they should engage solemn obedience.

In the thirteenth century, an effort was made by Mendicant orders of Priests to intrude into Parishes, and, under the direct authority of the Pope, administer to any or all, as they thought fit, the Sacraments of the Church. The Mendicants, long upheld by the Pope in their violation of the laws of the Church, were the popular preachers of their day, and the greatest troublers of the peaceful Parish Priests, whose jurisdiction they invaded with their novel and more attractive ministrations. Now the Fourth Canon of Chalcedon had subjected all monks to their Bishops; so that this invasion was as much to be resisted by them as by their representatives, the Parish Priests.¹

The Priest of every Christian Parish being thus essential to it, surely no believer in Chrstianny who

¹ It stands among the reserved excommunications, "contra regulares"; that Mendicants shall not administer the last Sacraments of the Church—"sine licentiâ PAROCHI." *Clement. I. de privil.*

wishes to be ruled by its laws, can regard parochial distinctions as "matters of form." Whosoever would revive true religion, should begin by examining his own position in the parochial system, where his lot has been cast; how far he tries to fulfil his own duties of love and allegiance to the Parish Church, and the Priest who presides over it and its people "in the Lord." If he is going on practically unconnected with his Parish Clergyman, is he not in practice an "independent"? The twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh Canons of the Church of England, for example, take it for granted that the Parishioners are all known to the Clergyman; and the twenty-eighth is very strict against those who "come often and commonly from other parishes." And these canons are not peculiar to us, but are founded herein on the principles of the ancient laws of the Catholic Church. Indeed this regard for the ancient practice of the Church is not only to be observed in the practical assumptions of some of our Canons, but in the express acknowledgment thereof, in others; as for example, in the thirtieth, which defends the "Sign of the Cross." It is there said, "so far was it from the purpose of the Church of England to forsake and reject the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, or any such like Churches in all things which they held and practised, that it doth with reverence receive those ceremonies which do neither endamage the Church of God, nor offend the minds of sober men, &c." They, indeed, who are unacquainted with our ecclesiastical records, down to the time of the suppression of Convocation, (A.D. 1717) would have little, if any, idea of the very *gradual* decay of our Discipline. We blame the era of the Reformation very unjustly for all this loss of Discipline; for except in the

awful reign of Edward VI., (so providentially cut short !) the hundred years following the Reformation witnessed a prolonged struggle to keep up much of the ancient canonical and parochial system. Even the "Court of High Commission" was but an irregular attempt to strengthen and support the decayed power of the Episcopacy, and vindicate the Church's law, though with "carnal weapons" ever to be deplored. Let all, then, who would be churchmen in deed, and not in name only—let all who would see our Parish system a living reality throughout—let all who would have the comfort of "growth in grace" in their own souls, labour earnestly for the restoration of that "Godly primitive discipline," of which we yet have these remains in our Prayer Books ! Let every Christian soul (I say), examine how he stands with his Parish Priest and his Parish Church ! What duties remain unfulfilled, what relationships unrealized ! How far each in his sphere may be "frustrating the grace" of the Most High, unless he be furthering the designs of His Spiritual kingdom in the earth !

AND may HE in His mercy arise and have mercy upon our Zion—if so be "the time to favour her, the set time is come" ! May HE "turn the hearts of the Fathers to the children, and of the children to the Fathers, lest HE come and smite the earth with a curse !"

LECTURE IV.

THE PRIEST.

FROM THE GOSPEL.¹

“PEACE BE UNTO YOU.”—S. JOHN XXI.

It is not the intention of this lecture to dwell on the Office of the Christian Priesthood generally ;² but only as it stands connected with the subject of Jurisdiction, and in reference principally to our own Church. For this purpose we must somewhat recapitulate.

Recapitulation.

That Hierarchical power which our LORD imparted to His Apostles for the government of His people, they, in their turn, (as we have seen) gave to their Successors whenever they laid hands on them, and said, as CHRIST had said in giving the keys of the kingdom, “whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Consequently, wheresoever the “power of the keys” is bestowed, we must acknowledge that a capacity of jurisdiction exists. The same causes, however, which would impede the action of the grace of Orders, might also suspend, as to their exercise, the rights of Jurisdiction. Thus if, in conformity with the Church’s laws, and for sufficient causes, a Bishop or Priest be superseded or degraded, his jurisdiction is at once in abeyance. So far there seems but little question, or difficulty.

¹ St. Thomas’s Day.

² See Introductory Essay.

But among those who are equally endued with the Distinctions. grace of Priesthood, and therein abide, all are not equally gifted with jurisdiction. The Bishop, confirmed in his see according to the Canons, and the Priest, duly appointed by the Bishop over his parish, have special Hierarchical rank and power in the Church. Hence it is necessary, for the sake of clearness, in some degree to distinguish what grace of jurisdiction dwells in a Priest, as Priest, prior to, and apart from, his canonical appointment, and in virtue of his orders only?—and how far, and in what sense, jurisdiction might be exercised, without the priestly character at all?

Now we know that in the Bishop dwells the plenitude of the Priesthood—both orders and Jurisdiction. Plenitude of the Priesthood in the Episcopacy. This is the doctrine of the Fathers for the first twelve hundred years, and this, therefore, is our one answer to the utterly groundless pretension of the Pope to be the head and fount of Jurisdiction to the Church. “The Bishop represents CHRIST, and acts as His substitute on earth, as the holy Fathers constantly affirm. CHRIST gave *both* the powers of the Episcopate to the Apostles; afterwards, they handed down the same fulness of authority to the Bishops.”¹ These are the words of one in the Roman Communion, able, if any were, to speak learnedly and well. To these, and like sayings, Pereira adds, “the power of JURISDICTION is so closely allied with that of ORDER, that, in the understanding and acceptance of the Primitive Church, a Bishop deprived of jurisdiction was actually regarded in the light of a layman. This

¹ The French Divine, under the name of Petrus Aurelius, quoted in the “*Tentativa Theologica*,” p. 45, (Mr. Neale’s English Edition. London : Masters.)

is a little over-stating of the matter, yet is not far from the truth; but, in the Primitive Church, no Bishop could be deprived of jurisdiction save by the decision of a synod of his brethren. "The very name Episcopus, (as he rightly continues) which implies superintendence and care, more expressly denotes jurisdiction than order."¹ It may suffice, on this head, here to point out that the ideas themselves are distinct.

Of Jurisdiction
without
Orders.

1. A Bishop may, in some degree, delegate jurisdiction without conferring orders; and, on the other hand, he may confer orders, and yet fix limits to the exercise of their jurisdiction; which indeed, the Bishop always does. As an example of the Bishop's delegating jurisdiction apart from Priests' orders,² it may be mentioned that even the Vicar-General of the Bishop need not be a Priest, according to the Canon Law; (except in Spain, where there is a special rule to that effect.) The Vicar-General is only required to be a Jurist, and twenty-five years of age; and then, even though a layman, he exercises ordinary jurisdiction *in foro externo*; and he could do no more, as Vicar-General, were he in full orders: nay, if he were himself a Bishop, he could not intrude into that jurisdiction "*in rebus divinis*," which is canonically reserved to the Bishop of the diocese personally. As a second example of jurisdiction conferred apart from the Priesthood, might be adduced the institution of a Deacon to a Parochial Church; which sometimes, however undesirably, may take place. This is a different case altogether from the

¹ This subject is ably discussed in the exercitations prefixed to the 4th Venice Edition of S. Thomas Aquinas.

² In the Latin Church the Vicar-General is expected to be in Minor Orders. The Greek Church has not kept up the four ranks of Ministry below the Subdeacon.

former, and is an instance of the separate existence of sacerdotal orders and jurisdiction, in the only other sense perhaps which is of any consequence. The former example, I mean, respected jurisdiction “in foro externo”; this does not. If a Deacon be Parochus, he has in such sense jurisdiction, for instance, that he baptizes his parishioners,¹ and delegates to a stipen-

¹ According to some mediæval Doctors, a Deacon, if he were the Incumbent, might allow Marriage to be celebrated in his presence, though, as a general rule, the presence of a Priest was necessary. The principle on which they defended this was, that Matrimony, though a Sacrament, was not, as to its essence, dependent on the Priesthood. The essence of any Sacrament consists in the matter of the *Divine Institution*. The essence of a Sacrament *exists, previous* to the Sacrament itself. As water, for Baptism, was Divinely created from the beginning, and CHRIST took it, and mystically sanctified it; so Marriage was a Divine Ordinance from the beginning, but taken by CHRIST, and mystically endued with His grace. To take an opposite case: the Priest is of the essence of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, because he is so a part of the Divine Institution, that the matter (“*Hoc est Corpus Meum*”) spiritually would *not exist* without the consecrator.

Peter Lombard and Aquinas explain, with some care, the doctrine taught in their days respecting Holy Matrimony. It may be stated thus:—

We may consider Matrimony as an Institution.

1. Of the Law of Nature;
2. Of the Law of Nations;
3. Of the Law of Moses;
4. Of the Law of CHRIST.

Under every law the Institution is itself a *Divine one*: but under the Law of CHRIST it is accompanied by a *special grace*. (See Council of Trent, Sess. xxiv. cap. 2; Introduc. and Can. 2. Also S. Thom. Aquin. Sum. Theolog. in loco, and D. Scotus, L. iv. dist. 26. &c.)

Under the Christian Law, *this special grace* is received when Matrimony is had in the pale of the Church, to which the *presence* of the Priest is *required*, and *probably* his *blessing* also. But without this special grace a Marriage, when consummated, is *valid* though not

diary Priest the ministering of the other Sacraments, under the Bishop's licence. This is jurisdiction "in foro interno," though in the lowest degree.

The Power
of the Keys
latent in a
Priest, as
such.

2. The next point to be distinguished is, that right capacity or power of jurisdiction which exists in the Priest, as such; and the *exercise* of which is directed or limited by the Bishop, as, under CHRIST, the *fons et origo* of spiritual gifts to men. Now every priestly act which has influence over the souls of Christians, from the first gifts of Baptism, to the last "Peace be

Christian. If a Christian marries without the ordered rites of the Church, he commits *impiety*, but not immorality. He, to that extent, *heathenizes*.

A Heathen Marriage, or a Jewish Marriage, is *essentially* a Divine Institution; but if a Christian falls back to it, he commits the same offence as he would if on any other point he fell back to Heathenism or Judaism.

The coming of CHRIST has added a grace to that which was from the beginning a Divine Ordinance. The essence of the rite is the same: the grace is additional.

For the sake of any who may be interested in it, I will add the following from Aquinas:—"Some have said that Matrimony is in no way the cause of grace; but is only a sign. But this cannot stand; because, according to this, it would in no wise exceed the Sacraments of the Old Law, whence there would be no reason why it should be placed in the number of the Sacraments of the New Law; for its affording a remedy to concupiscence, (which would run riot if not restrained) was also the case under the Old Law, and by the rule of nature itself.

"Therefore, some have said that grace is conferred therein only in order 'to recede from evil'; and that the act is excused from sin, which, without Matrimony, would be sin. But this is saying too little; because this also holds in respect of the Old Law; and further, the same grace which keeps from evil inclines to good, as heat, which takes away cold, warms us.

"Whence others say that Matrimony, inasmuch as it is contracted in the faith of CHRIST, has the power of conferring grace, aiding those good works which pertain to that state. And this is more probable."

to you," with which he enters the house of a dying brother, has somewhat of the nature of spiritual jurisdiction. The Power of the Keys, in whatever degree exercised, is a power over souls; and the principle asserted in other cases, "*quod fieri non debet, factum valet*," is, at times of "extremity and urgent necessity," deemed applicable here also, in the judgment of approved Canonists. Nor is the "power of the keys," when once given, a merely delegated power. It is henceforth inherent in the Priest, as such, though only to be rightly exercised according to the Church's sacred laws. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." A latent power must not be identified with a living authority; for "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, in all the Churches of the saints."

But the "Power of the keys," when in active operation, implies, according to the full sense of the words, both the power of external Government of the Church as a body; and of the internal Government of individual souls. The canonical Bishop has both these powers; because he is both Priest and Bishop; but the Priest has only the latter belonging to him as Priest. If he has any portion of the former (as was said in the last lecture), it is as the delegate of the Bishop; which indeed the Parochus, or parish Priest, always is and must be. For seeing that the exercise of the external and internal jurisdiction is ever closely allied, it is of no avail to possess the capacity of internal jurisdiction, without previously having the gift of the external. The Church has ever forbidden those to attempt to exercise the latter who were wholly cut off from the former. In other words, a Priest, though inherently capable, "*in rebus divinis*" is not allowed to act, without the

The Power
of the Keys
active in the
Parochus.

Bishop's permission; except in "necessity" and "extremity." It is not that the Incumbent Priest is any more a Priest than his assistant; but it is, that to the Incumbent alone, is committed the "cure of souls and Government of the Church, saving only the rights of the Bishoprick." He alone represents the centre of Unity: none unauthorized can "build on his foundation." He may give permission to other priests to act for him in some matters purely spiritual; but not in any which might be likely to touch on the external jurisdiction. The Parochus alone, be it repeated, has ordinary jurisdiction "in foro interno." If he be oppressed by too onerous duties he may apply to the Bishop to license some "other discreet and learned" Priest to assist him in certain things; but none uninvited or unlicensed may lawfully "intrude into another man's line of things," none "stretch himself beyond his measure."——Thus much may suffice as to the general position of the Priesthood in the Hierarchy. The special functions of the Priesthood can only be fully understood by observing them in union with Jurisdiction, *i. e.*, in the Priest of a Parish; in other Priests the functions are more or less restrained.

His guidance, in our Church.

It is not here necessary to dwell on regulations which affect the functions of the parish Priest in other

¹ "Potest tamen parochus, pro meliori curâ animarum, atque officiorum parochialium executione, et aliquali suâ quiete, unum vel plures co-operatores habere, et ipsi seu ipsis relinquere munera magis ardua, ut ire de nocte ad infirmos, peragere divina officia, in ecclesiis filialibus distantibus, confessiones multas audire, et hujus modi: [sc. si approbati:] dummodo simul ipsemet Parochus, cessante justo impedimento, aliqua etiam munia pastoralia, præsertim principaliora, personaliter præstare non intermittat, et quando nominatim vocatus a parochianis ad ipsos, præsertim infirmos, ire non recuset."—*Ferraris, Parochus. Art. II.*

Churches. We have to do with our own Church primarily : and that the more specially, seeing that the duties of the Priesthood are, among us, subject to some modifications and wise restraints, which ought not to be lost sight of in this discourse. In the Church of England the whole training of a Christian even from his earliest years, is indeed designed to be blessed by the Priest's ministry ; though freer scope is intended to be given to the responsible action of the individual Christian among us, than in some other Churches. Nor let what is here to be drawn out be offensive to any. Guidance and authority are not set at nought by the experienced and wise. However much the ill-informed may dislike to be reminded of it, it is undeniable, that most people follow authority, not only in their earlier years, but more or less, all their lives. It is very far from a sign of a strong mind to be chagrined at this fact ; for fact it is : but since some will manifest so much sensitiveness at being " dictated to," let a few words be said on this point.

First ; no man's life is long enough for him to go to the first principles of every thing : if any one were to try to do so, he would be simply surrendering the benefit of the experience of all former generations, and securing much ignorance for himself. In general, men do not object to the following of authority in matters of science and secular knowledge ; but only in religion. And yet surely they are inconsistent in this ; because science and worldly knowledge would seem to be, much more properly, the field for intellectual freedom and private research to distinguish themselves, than religion ; and it is unaccountable that some, who would be independent thinkers in their own opinion, bow to authority in science, where it ought to have compara-

Principle of this, intellectually.

tively little place, and cry out against authority in religion, as a plain usurpation of the rights of the human mind. Now in spite of all such declamations, in favour of freedom of judgment and the like, the facts of human nature abide. God has so constituted men that they do, in the main, follow some authority in religion, as in all things else. "Think for yourself," is a rule much more easily spoken than acted on. It is a folly, indeed, to attempt—it is a sin to wish, to put unlawful shackles on the mind of any.¹ We shall be all of us responsible for using all the powers and faculties God has given us. Whoever wishes to stifle free thinking, let not us be liable to the charge:—(in fact, many persons who exclaim on this topic, seem only anxious to be let alone, and allowed a freedom *from* thought;) but, I repeat, it is a fact of human nature, that men *follow authority* in most things, and that too even when opposing authority; and any religious system which strove too much to make every man, however qualified, "an independent thinker" will *fail* of its object; and discover that it is not adapted to such a being as man is.

Morally.

There is that also in the conscience of every moral agent which inclines him at one time to doubt himself and seek guidance, and be influenced by authority; as truly as at another to "think for himself." Where the one duty ends, and the other begins, is not perhaps to be settled by any abstract arguments. Its *practical* settlement is one chief part of our moral probation, and is not often difficult to the honest mind. Regarding our whole mental and moral constitution as the "workmanship of God," however deteriorated, it must contain in it to a large extent the law of our conduct. Indeed, before Christianity, this was *all* that

¹ See the Introductory Essay, p. xli.

most men had to guide them : they were a “law unto themselves.” And Christianity has not *altered* our human constitution fundamentally ; otherwise we were no longer men. When, therefore, at any time we see aught that is suitable to human nature, as such, whether in practice or principle, we necessarily trace it back to nature itself, wherein it must have had some origin. Such is the general argument against the Atheistic reasoner, for example, that religion is necessary and true for such a being as man is,—his very constitution having always been such that some religion was required for its well-being, either its present protection or future peace. And what is thus said of religion itself, is true also of its mode of reception in all ages. Human nature has required, and would have **AUTHORITY**, to rest on. The education of the generality—and especially the religious education—has ever been authoritative, and transmitted, rather than literary or independent. The faith and knowledge of their fathers comes with power to children in early years ; hence the Apostle records how, from his youthful training, he became “exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers.” Thus, too, all the truths of popular faith and knowledge are sustained, one cannot define how, by the authoritative though sometimes dim tradition inherited from trusted guides, whom the general conscience of men trusted, because it must have a “trust.” Let man be enlightened to the utmost ; but this is human nature still.

Consider then, as Churchmen, what close and affectionate watchfulness the Christian **PRIEST** is expected among us to have—what influence to wield as **PRIEST**, even from the very beginnings of the moral course of every one of his flock. According to the first

The Priest,
baptizing.

Rubric of the Service for private Baptism of children; we learn that the "Curates of every PARISH shall often admonish the people that they defer not the Baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday after their birth, or other holiday falling between, unless upon a great and reasonable cause, *to be approved by the CURATE*" : (i. e., the parish PRIEST who has the "cure.") The second Rubric, in the service for public Baptism, fixes the number of Godfathers and Godmothers; and these, according to the canons, must be communicants. The parish Priest has to inquire respecting this, if he be in doubt: "Parents must also give knowledge" of the Baptism "over night, or in the morning before the beginning of Morning Prayer," in order that all may be ready at the font, after the second Lesson of Morning or Evening Prayer, as "the Curate by his discretion shall appoint." "Then shall the PRIEST proceed." Observe, no Deacon, nor layman, is supposed to be the ordinary Minister of Baptism; but only the PRIEST. For though a Deacon may baptize in case of necessity (as we find Philip did the Eunuch of Ethiopia,) yet the canons suppose the parish PRIEST, because he has the jurisdiction of souls, to be ordinarily the minister of Baptism; and the Deacon at his ordination only receives authority to baptize "in the absence of THE PRIEST." The reason of this, according to the Canon Law, is "that Baptism is the act of the Pastor himself, and requires *ordinary jurisdiction* in the administrator, therefore the Bishop in his diocese, and the Incumbent in his parish, alone has inherent right to baptize; though the latter may also commission or 'delegate' authority, if he be a Priest." If, indeed, (as has been said,) the Incumbent be admitted to a parish before he is a Priest, (i. e., while yet

only in Deacon's orders,) he has, by virtue of the JURISDICTION, as Incumbent, the right of baptizing.

According to the 29th canon of the English Church (which is binding on the Clergy,) Godparents must satisfy the PRIEST that they are fit and proper persons for the office. In the service for Baptism, the PRIEST addresses the sponsors as persons to whom he is not a stranger: and, by the ancient canons, the Priest has the duty assigned him of naming sponsors; if the parents fail to do it. At the close of the service in our own Church, he solemnly charges the Godparents to teach the child the Creed, the LORD's prayer, and the Decalogue, and bring him to Church. After which, a promise is given to the PRIEST, that the child shall be taught the Catechism, and in due time confirmed by the Bishop.

The Priest,
examining
sponsors.

The next step in the training of a Christian by his Priest, according to our Church, is to be seen "so soon as he is able to learn what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he has made." At the end of the Catechism stands this order:—"All fathers, mothers, masters, and dames, shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices, which have not learned their Catechism, to come to the Church, at the time appointed, and obediently hear, and be ordered by the Curate;" and he has to "openly instruct and examine"—"as many as he shall think convenient." If the Priest neglects this, he is liable, by the 59th of the English Canons, to be suspended, and at last excommunicated. Or, if parents or masters neglect it, they are to be forbidden from communion.

The Priest,
catechizing.

Thus does the Church require the Christian's education to be, from its earliest beginnings, under the Priest's guidance. And the same care, during the

The Priest,
teaching.

whole period of pupilage, was exercised by the Church, whose desire as to what her Priests should be, and whose effort for her children also, may be learned from the 77th canon, which forbids any to teach without the Bishop's licence; and the 78th canon, which gives to the parish Clergyman the primary claim to that licence, if he thinks right to have it.

The Priest,
preparing for
confirmation.

At length, when the time for Confirmation is arrived, the children are to be brought to the PRIEST, and he is to give to the Bishop a list of "all such persons within his parish as *he shall think fit*," to be confirmed. All who so come to be Confirmed, are required to have "*one* godfather, or godmother, as a witness." In this case the godfather, or godmother, is not necessarily the same who undertook for the child at Baptism; but if from any cause the original godparents be absent from the Confirmation, *one* should be appointed: only, the PRIEST should see that no one so stands who is out of the communion of the faithful. The ancient canon law only requires one sponsor for Baptism; we (following a custom as old at least as the twelfth century,) have retained three. But, at Confirmation, we adhere to the general rule of the Western Church, and have *one* only. At the close of this office we read, "There shall none be admitted to the holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed; or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."

The Priest,
preparing for
communion.

Let us pass on to the next great event in the spiritual life—the receiving of the first Communion. The consecration of that most sublime of Heaven's mysteries, is the solemn glory, the highest joy of the Priesthood. The functions of the Priest, in reference to the souls of Christians, as thus far considered—in baptizing, teaching, examining, catechizing, protecting, watching, and bringing to Confirmation, might, by pos-

sibility, and in extremity, be in a measure exercised by a Minister, below the Priesthood. But in respect of the Holy Sacrament, it is far otherwise. Here, none but the PRIEST can act. The Church's first direction is, that "so many as intend to be partakers of the holy Communion shall signify the same to the Curate some time the day before." The intention of this is explained to be, to keep improper persons from the communion. The Priest, who finally "repels" any from communion, is bound to inform the Bishop within fourteen days, and the Bishop is to judge them "according to the canon." The persons who are liable to be so repelled, are (by the Rubric,) unrepentant "ill-livers," and those who are "in malice" with their neighbours.

As to the former class, the Priest will have to decide on their being faithful, repentant, and in charity, or no; by an "examination of their lives and conversations by the rule of God's word;" by ascertaining whether they have been faithfully attending the public worship of the Church, and have so been in the way of receiving Absolution day by day, or week by week, for their failings in duty to God or man. It would be hard indeed, to give any opinion of the state of any baptized soul who had been going on long in a neglect of the public ordinances of religion. And, on the contrary, the judgment of charity, in the absence of evidence of sin or malice, should incline us to the conviction that, by the ordinary use of the Priesthood in the Services of the Church, the baptized were retained in a state of grace.

The ordinary Service, even the daily worship, of the Church of England, can only (according to the Prayer-book,¹) be conducted by a PRIEST; and there

The Priest,
examining.

The Priest,
worship-
ping.

¹ Many have fancied that the Deacon may read all the Prayers,

is, whenever the sacrifice of Prayer is offered in our temples, a gift of grace to the worshipper, a blessing "to all, and upon all them that believe." The regular attendance on the Divine worship would be then the most ordinary test of fitness for the first communion.

The Priest,
in private.

After the first communion, the Christian is not required by the Church of England to be constantly resorting to the Priest in private; but only when he himself finds that his conscience requires help, counsel, and comfort; or for any Rites or Sacraments of the Church. The duty of self-examination is to be enforced on the people previous to communion; and if they cannot "quiet their own consciences," the PRIEST is commanded to tell them to "come to him and open their grief," and receive "the benefit of Absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice." (See Exhortation to Communion.) In the case of such private application to the Priest, for relief and guidance, the Church of England gives every solace and protection to her children. By her 113th canon, she expressly provides, "That if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the Minister for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him, we do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever, any except "the Absolution;" but the least attention will discover the mistake of this. Other parts are as much restrained to "the Priest," as the Absolution. A Priest should always, at least, be *present*.

¹ As to the form of Absolution, I suppose the same is to be used as in the Visitation Service:—1st, Because the Church has provided no other—2nd, It was ordered in Edward's first book—3rd, Where the Church did not change the existing practice, it still continued. But who, indeed, would venture to make a form of his own?

crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy, (except¹ they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called in question for concealing the same,) under pain of IRREGULARITY.”²

There is an admirable remark of Bishop Jeremy Taylor in his “Guide to the Penitent,” (appended to his “Golden Grove”) which, I think, it will be profitable to add to this part of our subject. “As for the frequency of Confession, you are to consult with your own necessities; and, as your physician is not sent for upon every small distemper which your own care may rectify, so neither are you obliged, upon every failing, to be over scrupulous, or think it a point of necessity presently to confess it. For the Confessor cannot be always present, but your God is!” &c. Much of valuable guidance and admonition to the anxious mind may also be obtained from his observations on this whole subject, in the connexion of this passage, and in his invaluable works on the Doctrine and Practice of Repentance, and on Holy Living and Dying. Therein we are at least made to feel how assuredly it is the Church’s desire that, in all the

The Priest,
in all holy
offices.

¹ And even this exception is not to be regarded as touching the Priest’s duty in this matter; for, 1st, it only says, that *this Synod*, in making this canon at that time, did not “straitly charge the Priests,” as to crimes of this dangerous kind, one way or the other, either for their concealment or the contrary; and 2ndly, If the Synod intended to allow any exception of this kind, it would not be binding; because, (says Blackstone,) these Canons are only binding *so far as they agree with the ancient Canon law*: and 3rdly, The exception probably means no more than what the Canon law recognizes, viz.—That if any one reveal his crime to a Priest, for any other than a penitential purpose, there is no seal of secrecy. See Art. *Sigillum*.

² The punishment of “Irregularity,” here referred to, is most severe; and (by the Canon law, which we inherit, and which is thus appealed to by our Canons,) not only deprivation, but *incapacity for all ecclesiastical functions* might ensue.

details of her children's life on earth, there should be the consecrating grace of religion. She desires her Priest's blessing to rest on infancy ; on youth ; on the bridegroom, and the bride ; on the mother, and her new-born child ; on health and on sickness : yea, in whatsoever Christian house the Priest's voice is ever heard, the Church would have it say in CHRIST'S behalf, "Peace be to this house!"

The Priest,
in sickness.

Finally ; it remains that I speak of the last act of a faithful Priest towards the Christian soul over which he has the cure and charge. Our Church, which leaves to our own conscience to decide, in some measure, in our days of maturity, and health, and strength, how far we need, or not, the special assistance of the Priest—leaves us no such option (if we will hear her voice) when we come to lie on our bed of extreme sickness, or approaching dissolution. Scripture itself gives us the rule, which the Prayer-book of our Church in this place has aimed most exactly to follow. S. James, in his Epistle, asks, "Is any sick among you?" and directs that he should "send for the presbyters of the Church," who are to "pray over him . . . in the name of the LORD." If he "had committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." After which the Apostle adds, "Confess your faults one to another ;" and bids them think of "the effectual prayer of a righteous man," as instanced in God's Prophet, who interceded for Israel.¹ Now, in conformity with this, the first Rubric in the Visitation Service is "When *any person* (rich or poor) is sick, notice shall be given to the Minister of the PARISH." He is at once to go to the sick man, and is liable to the heaviest ecclesiastical punishments if he refuse to go. "Whether the Parish Priest faithfully and readily ful-

¹ S. James v. 15, &c.

fuls this duty?" is a question put by the Bishop to the Churchwardens yearly, in his Schedule of Inquiries.

Now the manner of this solemn Visitation is so very sacred, that, knowing it will be the lot of every one of us one day to undergo this last visitation of the Priest, I need not urge a thoughtful and gentle listening to these most touching words, in the present moment of health, and perhaps vigorous life. Go forward in thought to that moment when you will lie stretched on your dying bed. It may overawe your souls to meditate thereon. Such thoughts can never come amiss. By the Church's call, her Priest is by your side. And what shall he do?—what say in the name of Him, before whom in a brief space you are to stand?

The Priest,
in the hour
of death.

"I exhort you, in the Name of God, to remember the profession which you made unto God in your Baptism. And forasmuch as after this life there is an account to be given unto the righteous JUDGE, by whom all must be judged, without respect of persons, I require you to examine yourself and your estate, both toward God and man; so that, accusing and condemning yourself for your own faults, you may find mercy at our Heavenly FATHER's hand for CHRIST's sake, and not be accused and condemned in that fearful judgment. Therefore I shall rehearse to you the Articles of our Faith, that you may know whether you do believe as a Christian man should, or no.

¶ Here the Minister shall rehearse the Articles of the Faith, saying thus,

"Dost thou believe in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER of heaven and earth?

"And in JESUS CHRIST his only begotten SON our LORD? And that He was conceived by the HOLY GHOST, born of the Virgin Mary; that He suffered

under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; that He went down into hell, and also did rise again the third day; that He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY; and from thence shall come again at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead?

“And dost thou believe in the HOLY GHOST; the Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the Remission of sins; the Resurrection of the flesh; and everlasting life after death?

¶ The sick person shall answer,

All this I stedfastly believe.

¶ Then shall the Minister examine whether he repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world; exhorting him to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him; and if he hath offended any other, to ask them forgiveness; and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power. And if he hath not before disposed of his goods, let him then be admonished to make his Will, and to declare his Debts, what he oweth, and what is owing unto him; for the better discharging of his conscience, and the quietness of his Executors. But men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health.

¶ These words before rehearsed may be said before the Minister begin his Prayer, as he shall see cause.

¶ The Minister should not omit earnestly to move such sick persons as are of ability to be liberal to the poor.

¶ Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession, the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort,

“OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by His authority

committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen."

Then shall the Priest give to the dying believer the last Communion of the Body and Blood of his LORD; and, while his eyes are closing to every sight of earth, and his ear listening for the first songs of Angels, his spirit is "commended into the hands of its Faithful CREATOR and most Merciful SAVIOUR!"

"BLESSED are the dead that die in the LORD!"

Brethren; how can I better close this night's discourse than by repeating the words of that holy Priest long since departed to his rest, (but whose name lives in the heart of our Church, as one of its saintliest and highest) the blessed Hooker?¹ He exclaims, as with a divine eloquence lighted up within him at the majesty of the Ministry he bore for his LORD, as the channel of His inexhaustible mercy,² "In that the Priests are CHRIST's ambassadors and labourers, who should give them their commission but He, Whose inmost affairs they manage! Is not God the Father of Spirits? Are not souls the purchase of JESUS CHRIST? What Angel in heaven could have said unto man, as our LORD did unto Peter, Feed My sheep—preach, baptize—do this in remembrance of Me—whose sins ye retain are retained, and their offences in heaven are pardoned, whose faults you on earth forgive. What think we? Are these terrestrial sounds? or else are they voices uttered out of the clouds above?"

¹ He was himself in the habit of very frequent Confession during his life; see Walton's Life, &c. Saravia was his Confessor, I believe.

² Eccl. Pol. Book v., c. 77.

APPENDIX.—No. I.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNITY.

UNITY, an
Article of the
Creed.

THE Doctrine of the UNITY of the Church is a fundamental doctrine, a part of our Creed ; we “believe in ONE Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.” It is no merely formal point ; a question of SCHISM, from the ONE Body, can be no less than a vital question. How any ever have imagined this to be a technical or unimportant matter of dispute, can only be accounted for by attributing to them a failure of perception, as to the whole subject. Whoever reflects on the theory of the ONENESS of the Church, so as to understand at all *why* the Church is, and is called, ONE, will not only perceive the magnitude and importance of the doctrine, but he may also be protected against those sophistical reasonings respecting it, which are only influential where the questions involved are discussed in *ambiguous* terms.

Difficulties
as to its Ad-
mission..

Many persons, indeed, have been surprised to find themselves as if entrapped, or enforced, into certain conclusions, as the logical deductions from admitted premises—conclusions which their heart and conscience were reluctant, if not unable, to adopt, but inevitably deducible, in terms, from premises beyond dispute. Now such persons have not set out by *understanding their premises*, and the consequences are often very painful. Many thus find themselves placed in the inconsistent position, apparently, of persons who know certain principles to be true, and yet are afraid to follow them out ; and then some will surrender their premises rather than be compelled to a revolting conclusion ; others will deny the conclusion and hold to the premises, only as an obscure matter of faith. But will clear reasoners and honest hearts be able to endure this ? Let us now steadily consider it.

Roman
Catholic
apology.

A certain doctrine of UNITY is laid down by Roman Catholics ;

and one consequence of admitting it, soon proves to be, that all the Greek Church, and the Anglican, and its dependencies, must be considered as in SCHISM, *i.e.* in a state of separation from CHRIST's mystical BODY, the Church, the one habitation of the Spirit, to whom alone the promises are made! If this conclusion be shrunk from, Roman Catholics point us back again to our acknowledged premises, our common Creed, that the Church of CHRIST is but ONE, and is a VISIBLE BODY. To facilitate the faith of young converts, it is added (or used to be) that "involuntary ignorance" is a valid plea in behalf of good persons in other communions, who may be conceived to be in vital union with the Church, through the grace of Baptism only. But then this is so grossly *unreal* when it is closely looked into, that it soon comes to nothing. To speak of the "involuntary ignorance" of Andrewes, or Bramhall, or Hooker, (not to name any who are now among us,) will never stand. But, as if to place this matter beyond all doubt, the question is put and discussed, with the greatest care, in Dr. Hay's popular and well-known book, "The Sincere Christian Instructed," which contains the present teaching of all classes of Roman Catholics in this country; and that, too, in its most "liberal" form. I will quote from the edition of 1839, sold by the "Catholic Book Society," page 471.

"Q. 14. What, then, is to be said of those, who, being brought up in a false religion, have no opportunity of hearing about the true church and faith of CHRIST? or, of hearing of it only in a false and odious light? Can such as these be saved, if they live and die in their separation from the communion of the CHURCH of CHRIST, and in *invincible ignorance* of the truth?"

Involuntary
Ignorance;
an unreal
plea.

"A. The learned author of the book, called *Charity and Truth*, who seems willing to go as far as possible in favour of those who are not joined in the communion of the CHURCH of CHRIST, candidly owns, that it is quite uncertain if *any* such will be saved, even though in invincible ignorance; for, in laying down the true state of the question, he says, 'the meaning is, that no one is saved unless he be in the Catholic communion, either actually or virtually, either in fact, or in desire; and that we are not sure, generally speaking, that any one is saved out of the CATHOLIC CHURCH, who is invincibly ignorant of the true Church, and of the true religion.' Ch. i. Q. 3. The fact is, there is not one single testimony of the holy Scripture which gives reason to think that *any one will be saved out of that communion*; but there are great numbers, as we have seen above, which very strongly declare the contrary. So that all the

reasons which are brought in favour of those who are out of the Church, are taken from the supposition of cases that, perhaps, never exist, and from our imperfect notions of the goodness of God, or from the idea which some frame to themselves, of what is meant by being a member of the true Church; and those people of whom we speak in the present question, afford the principal grounds of these reasonings. For it is argued in this manner: Suppose a man born and baptized in a heretical sect, and afterwards, when he comes of age, to be in such circumstances as never to have an opportunity of hearing about the true religion, or if he does, it is always in such false and odious colours as serve only to make him detest it, and to make him more and more attached to his own way; and, on this account, to be in invincible ignorance of the truth. It is acknowledged by all, that this man, by his baptism, is made a member of the CHURCH OF CHRIST, and that, if he die before he come to the use of reason, he will certainly be saved in his baptismal innocence. Let us now suppose further, that, when he comes to age, he continues to live an innocent life, and by co-operating with the graces which God bestows on him, perseveres in his innocency, *and does his best*, according to the knowledge he has, and would do better if he knew it, is it not inconsistent with the goodness of God to suppose that such a man, living and dying in this state, would be lost? Is he not always in the sight of God, a real member of the Church of CHRIST, though not joined in her communion? And, if he die in his innocency, must he not be saved? Such is the argument proposed on this subject; and, to be sure, it has a dazzling appearance. But it must be observed, that there is the *strongest reason to doubt* that such a case as is there supposed, ever was or ever will be; for, (1) There is not the smallest ground in Scripture to suppose it. (2) As it is impossible for man, in his present fallen state, to preserve his baptismal innocence for *any* space of time (!) much less to persevere in it to the end of his life, without a *special and extraordinary* grace from God; and, as a grace of this kind is justly esteemed one of the most *singular* favours given by God to His faithful servants, who are members of His Church, and enjoy all the powerful helps that are only to be found in her communion, to enable them to persevere in their baptismal innocence to their death; is it to be supposed that God will bestow this so singular a favour upon any one who is not in her communion, and deprived of all these helps? And, if it be supposed that he loses his baptismal innocence by committing a mortal sin, but recovers the grace of justification by a sincere repentance, the difficulty still

increases. For a repentance without the help of the Sacraments sufficient to obtain the grace of justification, includes a perfect contrition, founded in a perfect love of GOD above all things ; a favour so seldom granted to sinners, even in the Church itself, (!) that the Sacrament of Penance is appointed by JESUS CHRIST as the standing means of supplying our deficiency in that respect. Now, what likelihood is there that ALMIGHTY GOD will bestow so very singular a favour upon one who has lost his innocence, and is not in the communion of His Church, and deprived of the helps she affords for recovering it ? But (3) let us *suppose the case* to happen as it is proposed, and that ALMIGHTY GOD gives this man these extraordinary graces by which he preserves his baptismal innocence to the last, dies in the grace of GOD, and goes to heaven ; would not this be making GOD CONTRADICT HIMSELF, (!) and act directly *contrary to the whole tenor* of His revealed will ? All the testimonies of Scripture above displayed concur to prove that GOD has appointed true faith in JESUS CHRIST, and the being in communion with the Church of CHRIST, as necessary conditions of salvation ; and yet, in the present case, the person would be saved who had not the true faith in JESUS CHRIST, and was not in communion with His Church, but lived and died in a heretical congregation. There is, therefore, the greatest reason to believe that such a case will never happen, but that a person brought up in heresy, and invincibly ignorant of the truth, being by those means deprived of all the helps and graces which are the consequences of the true faith, and which are only found in the *true Church*, [which he has said to be only the Roman,] will not preserve his innocence, but continuing in his heresy, and dying in his sins, *WILL BE LOST* ; not precisely because he had not the true faith, *of which he is supposed to be invincibly ignorant*, and therefore *not culpable in wanting it*, but for his other sins of which he dies guilty." (!!!)

This extract is in painful harmony with the whole tendency of the Roman Catholic mind in the present day. "I am thoroughly persuaded (says Mr. Edward Healy Thompson, in his Essay, 'The Unity of the Episcopate considered'), I am thoroughly persuaded that men's hearts in these days are not gained by half statements ; nor their convictions secured by withholding the full consequences which appear to be logically deducible from any ruled doctrine of the Church." Certainly, the writer of the preceding passage was quite aware of this spirit of our age ; yet, perhaps, he would have recoiled from the avowal of just administering to men's present appetite for things strong and violent. I quite agree, however, that it is thoroughly

The strong
Doctrine
now popu-
lar.

wrong to admit doctrines or principles, without being prepared for *all* that fairly follows.

Of UNITY,
considered
as a Law.

It is very common to find the UNITY of the Church only represented as if a fixed LAW of the Christian System, and perhaps an arbitrary one, with incalculable consequences attached to its observance. Now such a representation is not only most imperfect, but, taken by itself, would lower the doctrine of the UNITY into a mere technicality, having no reference to the essential truth of things. It surely is no wonder if earnest minds revolt from the formalism of a semi-Judaistic law, such as this would be. If we say the Church is ONE, there is a *meaning* in the statement—there is that in it which corresponds to the realities of the “new creation” in CHRIST JESUS. It cannot be only a mechanical arrangement of a System: it is an Article of the CREED.

Of UNITY, as
the Law of
the whole
Church.

1. The ONENESS of the Church is predicated in Scripture in reference to CHRIST, who is the ONE HEAD of the whole “New Creation,” which is His ONE BODY. Whoever is not in that “New Creation, of which the second Adam is the HEAD, is yet in the Old Creation, of which the first Adam was the head; (and all who abide in the state of nature inherited from fallen Adam, are under the curse.) Any schism, or separation from that One Body, is a separation from CHRIST, its HEAD and Life. The human race descended from the “first man” is one race: the spiritual race, descended from the “Second Man, the LORD from heaven,” is one also. This “One Body of CHRIST” is, in all this dispensation, *in a process of formation*; and, when all is completed, and the last of the elect is gathered in, its UNITY will be accomplished for ever. Of that “One Body” some of the members are now passed “within the veil;” some are still here on earth; and some are yet unborn. In the strictest sense, that portion of the Church which, at any time, is living on earth, is not One Body, and cannot be: it is only the militant *part* of the “One Body in heaven and earth.” So also, that portion of the Church which exists in any part of the earth is not, strictly, CHRIST’s “One Body.” It is the VISIBLE part thereof, in that place. CHRIST alone is the “Head of His Body the Church”; and it is in reference to His One Headship that His members, of every nation, kindred, tribe, and tongue, and every age, form but ONE BODY. And not to be found in that Body at last, will surely be *not to be saved*.

Of UNITY, as
the Gift of

2. The ONENESS of the whole Church—the Church of all ages—

is spoken of in Scripture, in reference to the ONE SPIRIT, which inhabits it. "There is ONE Body, and ONE SPIRIT, even as ye are called with ONE hope of your calling, ONE LORD, ONE faith, ONE Baptism, ONE GOD and FATHER of all, who is above all and through all!" Surely here is a doctrine of UNITY, linked to all eternal realities. A total SCHISM from such a body—the body where the BLESSED SPIRIT dwells—is separation from heavenly grace and heavenly life for ever! Yet separation in some sense is not only possible, but inevitable for a time, between the various members of that One Body, which is partly militant, and partly triumphant. The UNITY will not be complete and perfect, until the Body is so. The degree of communion between us and the departed is high and mystical; between us and the faithful yet living in the world, is chiefly sacramental, and oftentimes only by virtue of our baptismal life in CHRIST.

Probably but few Christians of either the Roman Communion or our own would question what is thus far said. We have been speaking of the whole Church of the Redeemer, which alone forms the true UNITY, the ONE Body of which He is the Head. But, it will be asked, how is this sublime truth of the Unity of the whole Church to be brought down, as it were, and practically applied by and for each individual Christian from age to age? How is a Christian to know, at any time, that he is in the ONE BODY? Is there not a visible Representative, or Sign, and Instrument, of this Unity, accessible to individuals of every age? And we answer, yes. The visible Ruler or Head of the Church in every place is the centre of UNITY there—the remembrancer and representative and instrument of the Church's ONENESS, everywhere. The ONE continuous Church of Apostolic and Baptismal descent, is visible everywhere in its local head. To this indeed it has been objected by Roman Catholics, that this is making in each part of the Church an independent Unity; but they who make this objection forget that the very same may be said against themselves; for any living generation of the Roman communion, under any pope, *is but a part* of the whole body of CHRIST. The Roman theory is, that each *part* of the Church that happens to be living on the earth at one *time* is bound to consider itself as under one Head, the Pope. Our theory is, that each part of the Church that happens to be living on the earth at one *place*, is bound to have one Head, the Bishop. These are the two conflicting theories for realizing the VISIBILITY and UNITY of the

the ONE
SPIRIT.

Roman
Theories.

Church. The same objections lie against the one, as against the other. The *local* Church is, truly, but a *part* of the Whole; but so also the *living* Church is but a *part* of the Whole.

Fallacies.

And this last observation will surely lead to a detection of many of the fallacies and sophistries which have beset this subject. Men have argued, from what is said of the whole, that the like is to be always said of all its parts. The truth is, doubtless, that there is, and can be, but "ONE true Church," a membership in which is essential to salvation, but a part of this Church is now with CHRIST; and a part scattered on the earth, here and there; to say there are many parts of this Church, militant or not, is not to deny its Oneness. Does it destroy its oneness to say, that one part is here, and one part beyond the grave? that one part is yet scarcely baptized, and another part glorified? And if not, why is it impossible to believe in the Unity of the whole Church, and yet speak also of one of its earthly parts as in one place, and one in another?

If the present Papal theory, that the Pope is the Monarch of the Church Militant, be defended by any on the grounds of expediency, propriety, wisdom, custom, or the like rational grounds, the present observations pretend to be no reply to such. If any are of opinion, in spite of all solemn warnings, that it would tend to consolidate the forces of Christianity in its approaching struggle with infidelity to concentrate its system around the see of St. Peter, let them remember that the honest avowal of that conviction is after all very different from an assertion of original "divine right;" which most assuredly will never stand. But to those who argue for the Popedom as the one token and instrument of that one only true Church, in which is salvation, the foregoing observations will discover the fallacy of an argument from the whole to its parts, conducted chiefly through the means of the ambiguous term, "Unity."

SCHISM.

With respect to SCHISM, it may almost suffice to quote words used long since, as embodying the whole that needs to be said. "The Sin of Schism admits of various degrees. Of course if it be clearly made out that any part of the Church is (not partly torn only, but) totally severed from the Body Catholic, it follows that that part has not that sacramental grace which the Church alone possesses."* . . . As to our own case, "any man who will fairly deal with facts, will be obliged to own that there have been greater confusions and

* Lectures on the Succession, pp. 80, 82.

schisms in the See of Rome itself, than in the See of Canterbury." . . . "When the Popedom itself was a disputed matter for seventy years, it must have been hard for the laity to escape the anathema of one Pope or the other."

In this matter also, as in every other part of the Roman controversy, the fallacy of ambiguous terms has been successfully resorted to. SCHISM has been said to be proved by the fact of the "suspension of COMMUNION," between Anglican and Roman Churches. If it is meant that Roman Catholics have no "communion" except with those who have been admitted by them to their Altars; they would thus excommunicate and cut off thousands of their own baptized people: which their own rules prove that they do not. If then it is possible for tens of thousands of the indifferent, to live and die in the Catholic COMMUNION, (as they apparently suppose,) though never participating in any Sacrament but Baptism, we need not deem ourselves cut off from CHRIST, because our continental brethren deny us the rights of our common brotherhood, which we (through all provocations) will deny not to them.

But it would not be right to conclude this note without something more than a formal answer to controversial difficulties.

Our present position in the Church of England is this. We have, by God's good providence, and notwithstanding "fightings without and fears within," had preserved to us the Apostolic Succession, Mission, and Jurisdiction. What merciful escapes indeed we have had these three hundred years, may well be estimated by the fact that all the powerful assaults of the learning and ingenuity of the Church of Rome have not been able to dislodge us from our asserted position as the Catholic Hierarchy of this land. Marvellously has God preserved among us the essential Catholic doctrines, and Catholic ritual also. And let us ask ourselves, if these had not been preserved in all vital respects, what would it have availed us to be able to sustain a formal argument as to the fact of the Succession, or the Jurisdiction which, ordinarily, would accompany it? Let us put the case seriously to ourselves, (and may God, of his infinite goodness grant that it may never be more than an hypothesis;) that the Creeds were mutilated among us, and the Priesthood formally disowned, and the doctrine of the Eucharist profaned to Zuinglianism: could we then pretend that we were not in essential Schism from the body of the LORD? Surely in such a case, all vital and inward communion with

Suspension
of Commu-
nion.

The Ques-
tion of Doc-
trine, the
all-import-
ant one.

the Catholic Church would have ceased ; whatever formal Succession might be maintained. Then let us be more than ever on our guard against thinking that we shall be quite safe, as a Church, because we are able as yet to answer their formal charges against our Church and Hierarchy. The controversy respecting our "Jurisdiction" will come to an end ; just as that on our Succession has done. It need not make us anxious. The claim of the Popedom is so gross an usurpation, that it cannot stand (in its present form,) the examination of the nineteenth century. But it is a mistake to fancy that the dispute between Rome and the rest of the Christian world will be settled on, what will be called, a technical point. A few minds, impatient for a conclusion, will indeed be ready (as some have been,) to "narrow the controversy" to a single question of this kind. But it is altogether vain to think that the mind of this age will be satisfied in this way. The question of DOCTRINE—vital, fundamental, Christian doctrine, at last, will be *every thing*. And, to give satisfactory disproof of the claim of the Pope to be *jure divino* monarch of the Church : or to quote our willingness in the sixteenth century to appeal to a General Council : or to adduce the documents of our Succession of Bishops, and the like ; will go for *nothing*, if ever the time comes that the Catholic DOCTRINE is rooted out of our Church.

The dispute on Unity, apart from Doctrine, is far too *unreal* to interest a practical age. GOD give us still His Grace (as HE has given !) to "take heed to ourselves and to the DOCTRINE !"

APPENDIX, No. II.

ON THE ROYAL SUPREMACY.

A PAMPHLET has lately been issued by Mr. D. Lewis, entitled "Notes on the nature and extent of the Royal Supremacy in the Anglican Church." It is written in a clear and pleasing style, and (with a few exceptions,) with as much fairness as could be expected in a controversialist, who sets forth with a theory, not knowing that it will harmonize with no facts in the history of the Church; and with as much good feeling as any converts to the Church of Rome have in our days been wont to manifest to the Church of their Baptism. A brief answer, in this place, to this pamphlet may give an opportunity to touch on some of the popular fallacies connected with this subject.

(Page 9.) "Before the reign of Henry the Eighth, the supreme authority in the Ecclesiastical affairs of England was admitted to reside in the Holy See. . . . This authority was believed to be of Divine right. . . . It belonged to the Holy Father, as the successor of St. Peter, to whom our LORD had originally given it, and was held to be inalienable from the person of that successor. . . . The *whole* of that Ecclesiastical jurisdiction was believed to centre in him, and through him to be derived to his brethren in the Catholic Church."

Mr. Lewis believed this; and has printed it. A few ill-informed converts (though hardly of the stronger sex,) will think it historically certain. It is certainly no "half-statement," and so may win the heart of those in this generation who, as Mr. E. H. Thompson intimates, are so to be gained. If this be admitted as true, of "the *whole*" of that jurisdiction which may come under the designation of "Ecclesiastical," it will only be necessary to adduce clear instances of some acts of such jurisdiction exercised over the Anglican Church by the state, and every thing is settled to the satisfaction of the theorist's mind. This Mr. Lewis has done to his own

Mr. Lewis's
Theory.

Received by
the more
zealous.

content; and his pamphlet concludes with an eloquent sort of chorus of triumph over the Act-of-Parliament Church.

Not primitive.

If it were now to be attempted, to give a formal answer to the theory of Ecclesiastical jurisdiction here asserted, it would be necessary to follow not only Mr. Lewis, but Mr. E. H. Thompson also in his never to be sufficiently quoted fragments of St. Cyprian's Epistles, &c. This is not to be here undertaken. Indeed it were, at this time of day, a somewhat superfluous labour anywhere. "Quotations" from one Father, or from ten, can only answer their purpose for a short time. Though, for example, many a man now is imposed on by quotations from the Fathers of which he is no judge; the progress of Christian education will render this less and less possible. Controversialists will become honest at last, in spite of themselves. In this part of the debate with Rome, there will of necessity be a change. Is it not idle to argue about detached phrases of St. Cyprian, when it is utterly impossible for any man of competent understanding to read his epistles through without seeing that the Roman Ecclesiastical Theory is utterly unknown to the primitive Church, of which Cyprian was a Bishop?

Its Inconsistencies.

Let Mr. Lewis's pamphlet, then, be here kept to as much as may be; for it occupies a distinct field; it also contains the elements of its *answer* within it. He adduces certain acts of Ecclesiastical jurisdiction (or, to speak more exactly, of jurisdiction over the Church,) exercised among us by the Crown. He concludes that they are sufficient to invalidate the spiritual claims of a Hierarchy which has submitted to them. He does not know how far this argument would take him. Also, in making his case out against the English Church, he does not see how, at every step, it is exactly such as is irreconcilable with the Erastian theories; so that in scarcely any case does the conclusion he wishes, follow from his premises. In other words, we shall see that Mr. Lewis's history and his logic are equally at fault.

Charge of Erastianism

1. It is strange that it never occurs to the eager minds of Roman converts to reflect, that, if the authority exercised among us at times by the state had been so utterly destructive of our spiritual claims, as is covertly and at times pretended, it would have been much less sparingly urged against us than it has been. If the facts of history would sustain against us of the English Church a charge of Erastianism, most surely the charge would have been urged long ere this, with a demolishing power, against the whole fabric of Anglicanism. It is discreditable, in a solemn controversy like this,

to see a recourse from time to time to so poor a pretence, as any investigation may show this to be ; which can only impose on the zealous ignorance of converts. For, without seeking to justify each passage of our Church's history, it is enough for us to show, that if certain facts be destructive of *our* Catholicity, other Churches will have to look about for *theirs*.

From the time of the Edict of Milan, (A.D. 313,) the state had a recognized right to interfere in Christian matters. It has exercised that right in manifold degrees and ways, in every age ; and the Church has not only submitted to it, but recognized it. During the progress of the Donatist controversy, the catholics were (and with truth) taunted by their enemies with their recourse to the civil power for support, in the same way as the Romanists now taunt us. Now, the whole of Mr. Lewis's first chapter consists of a series of such accusations against us, founded on some facts of our history, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and his successors. He maintains, in that chapter, that "the whole English nation denied all Ecclesiastical authority, as such."—p. 29.

Historical
view of the
case of our
Church.

The leading facts, on which this accusation would be founded, seem to be these :—

(1st.) "Henry the Eighth broke off all the ordinary intercourse with Rome, and asserted the ancient rights of his crown over all estates of men in the realm."—p. 10.

(2nd.) The Clergy acknowledged the King to be head of the Church "*quantum per Christi legem licet*."—p. 11.

(3rd.) The Clergy, by a formal "act of submission" to the King, stipulated with him that they, on their part, would exact no canons of discipline without the royal consent to their meeting in synod, first given ; "only, your Royal Highness *shall* license us, &c. and thereto *shall give assent*, &c."—p. 11.

(4th.) By the 24th. Henry the Eighth, all appeals to Rome were forbidden ; and, by the 25th, all dispensations are commanded to be "had in this kingdom."—p. 21.

(5th.) By the 26th. Henry the Eighth, all "privileges, jurisdictions, and authorities," annexed unto the crown, by virtue of its supreme headship, are set forth ; and it is declared, that even "heresies" may be restrained and corrected by the crown, through the medium, of course, of the "spiritual authority, or jurisdiction" proper to the case.

(6th.) By the 37th. Henry the Eighth, ALL jurisdiction, as to "Ecclesiastical causes," is declared to flow from the crown.

(7th.) By the 1st of Edward the Sixth, the appointment of Bishops was vested absolutely in the crown.

Mr. Lewis's
inferences
from
history.

These seven points include, probably, all the argumentative basis of Mr. Lewis's tract. The facts enumerated subsequently, as to the reign of Elizabeth, are a repetition of these in a somewhat moderated form; as, for example, the title of "supreme head" is converted into "governor;" and the supremacy claimed is described as no new prerogative, but *only* the ancient right of the crown, (as the Statutes of Præmunire and of Provisors would abundantly show.) Now, it is by no means necessary to defend all the acts, much less all the *words*, of Henry the Eighth, or his convocations, or his parliaments. All we have to do is, to show that, taking them to have been as bad as they can justly be thought by Mr. Lewis, they do not affect our Ecclesiastical position, as he supposes. The King's declaring himself to be "above the law of God," (*had* he so declared, as some Popes have been declared,) would not have *made* him so; would not have altered the law of the Most High; would simply have been a great sin in him. The King's declaring *all* spiritual grace to descend from the crown to the Bishops, (which, of course, he never did declare,) would yet have been his own sin; Bishops would have remained Bishops, in spite of all such "declarations;" and whatever jurisdiction *was inherently theirs, would have so remained.*

Petitio
principii.

If the Pope be the sole fount of jurisdiction, then, doubtless, the severance of England from Rome, implied in those acts of the "Reformation," would lead to all the conclusions which Mr. Lewis deduces. And this assumption, this *petitio principii*, lies at the foundation of all Mr. L.'s reasoning. For, if *our* theory of jurisdiction be true, no vital consequences result from the admission of all the facts of the sixteenth century; though, in truth, very few of them are binding on us, and for very few are we responsible. The fatal objection to the Roman theory of jurisdiction is, that it is diametrically opposed to all the canons of the universal Church. But, what is now to be observed, it is beset by other historical difficulties, at least, as hard to justify as any in English history.

Second
Canon of
our Church.

The power of the Emperors in convoking the general, and at times even provincial, councils, and, indeed, their general bearing when Ecclesiastical matters were debated, was at least the plea on which Henry the Eighth justified himself in much of the course he adopted. The second canon of the Church of England refers expressly to the "Christian Emperors of the primitive Church," as vindicating in their example the royal supremacy. But a later historical period will be, perhaps, less liable to objection in the present matter.

Few monarchs have had more of the gratitude and approbation of the Church than Charlemagne, the friend of our own Alcuin—the establisher of the Church's legal claim to tithe, and her Bishops' legal exemption from the secular tribunals. It happens that most of the capitularies of his reign relate to church matters. He interferes of his own imperial authority, to direct that the Canonical books be read in churches; and he excludes all doubtful legends; he restrains the increase of saint worship; and his successors, for 200 years, claimed the right of the investiture of Bishops, with the ring and crosier. Nor will it alter facts to call all this the Church's "temporary submission" to the claim of supremacy in particular cases. All over Europe we may see the same, in different ages, from the days of the Exarchs of Ravenna, to those of Gregory the Seventh, who himself was confirmed in his see by the Emperor, as his predecessors had been by the Emperor's representatives, the Exarchs. Mr. L. argues, that if a Bishop is nominated by the King, "episcopal jurisdiction flows from the crown."—p. 21. The Kings of France long had the absolute nomination of Bishops; as much as had Edward the Sixth of England. So had, also, the Kings of Castille; and, according to Fleury,* the Kings of Spain also; nay, the Emperors, Otho the Great, and Henry the Third, nominated the Popes. And among practical exertions of the supremacy, it would not be easy to find in English history any thing more distinct and deliberate than the assumption of the Gothic Kings of Italy, to give dispensations in matrimonial causes. But why are all these facts adduced? To justify them? By no means. But only to remind men how much, in certain cases, the royal supremacy *has been*, without any one supposing that it did away with the inherent jurisdiction of the Church. And, indeed, if any would wish to have an example of a catholic monarch assuming the very title of "HEAD of the Church," without (I suppose) destroying the catholicity and jurisdiction of the hierarchy under her, he need be referred to no more erudite authority than our own historian, Hume, who informs us, that Queen Mary, even after she had once laid aside that name, *resumed it again*, after three months; and *she* is indeed the only English Queen that has ever borne that title.

The Royal Supremacy allowed in the Roman Communion.

2. But to conclude. Mr. Lewis's reasoning, in this pamphlet, of which I will give one or two examples, is even more uncomfortable than his history: because a clear writer, as he certainly is in one

Mr. Lewis's reasoning.

* Quoted, I should say, by Hallam, (our English Michelet,) "Middle Ages." Vol. ii. p. 269.

sense, ought to see the force of his own premises. Thus, he does not seem to see the very words he quotes, as limiting the recognition by the Clergy of the royal headship, "*quantum per Christi legem licet* ; which save everything. Then he does not see that the "act of submission," as he quotes it, only contemplates canons of "discipline," and even partakes of the nature of a *bargain* between the Church and the King: it shows, too, that the King *could not* act without a majority of the commissioners; which is quite inconsistent with the theory of Erastian supremacy, which he would fain fasten on us. He omits to tell us that the 24th. Henry VIII. states that all spiritual acts shall be performed by spiritual persons only. Again: he quotes (p. 19) that "canons were not to be made, *even with the King's consent*, against the customs, laws, and statutes, of the realm;" which looks not as if "the parliament had overreached the King and Clergy," (as Mr. L. generously supposes;) but, as if the King's supremacy were *restrained* from doing any fundamental wrong.

Other exam-
ples.

Then, once more: what are Mr. Lewis's reasonings on the question of dispensations? He gives us an account of the contrivances of the King to get the Church to issue the dispensations. And he thinks all this proves that the King claimed the power, as dwelling *in himself*! Every one, but the writer, must see, that the King would have granted them himself, or by his chancellor, if he had thought of his supremacy, as moderns would pretend. Why is it not said, that if the Archbishop refuses to grant dispensations, the King will do it himself? A fact like that would have been something; and might have reminded us of the old ostro-gothic Kings of Italy once more. But what does the King do in such a case? He issues a commission to "*two such spiritual peers as will do and grant the dispensations.*" It is amazing, that Mr. Lewis deduces from his facts this conclusion: "*He that issues dispensations, is the King.*"—p. 22.*

English po-
sition in the
16th Cen-
tury; and
now.

GOD forbid! indeed, that one word here said should seem to vindicate the course of that wicked monarch, who would have shrunk from nothing that he found necessary for the gratification of his passions. Yet he was by a merciful providence stopped, and hindered from touching the life of our Church. Nor need we study

* Mr. Lewis could not do better than write a History of the Royal Supremacy *from the Conquest to the Reformation*. I think it would not be an unprofitable task to furnish him with a few notes for such a work, from Godwin, Gibson, Wilkins, and certain "Statutes."

to put the worst meaning on all he said and did, which his words and acts would bear. Above all, we are not bound, surely, to deduce the true theory of the supremacy, from any of the monstrous acts or indefensible statutes of his reign; nor that of his unhappy and misguided son.

Every one must see, that the history of the relations of the Church and the world furnishes a really hard problem for theorists of every class. Bellarmine solves it in one way, Andrewes and Laud in another, Baxter and Calamy in a third. There is no denying the facts; the only question is, how to deal with them? There is the theory of "state-protection," which, of course, implies "state-interference" of a very large kind. There is the theory of "state-acknowledgment" of Christianity, which it would not be easy to distinguish (even in theory) from a human "patronizing" of the Divine. There is the theory of state-subjection, which was Gregory VIIth's; and the theory of Church-subjection, which is Erastus's, and Hobbes's; and the theory of "alliance," which is Warburton's. It would surely be unjust in any reasoner to forget that all these theories are speculative attempts to account for existing facts. Probably every possible theory is but an expedient.

Solutions of
the problem
of the Su-
premacy.

Our LORD's words, "Render under Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto GOD the things that are GOD's," clearly enough show the Christian that there are duties distinctly owing to both the Spirituality and the temporality, during the probation of man in this dispensation. This text alone one might think should have prevented the notion of the identification of Church and State, which is common to Gregory VII., and (in a degree) to Hooker and Hobbes. The text is the more remarkable, because it was no doubt designed to confront the prevalent views, both of Pagans and Jews, on this subject. Paganism had identified the religious and political conditions of human society. So had Judaism: and Popery would do the same. Judaism had a Divine warrant for this; but then it *did not introduce the considerations of a future state*, and so there was no collision. Judaism really belonged to this world. Paganism identified them, partly because of the easiness and simplicity, and even the abstract truth of such a view of moral life and action. So also does Popery; urging the abstract truth of the view, that eternity outweighs time, and all its petty interests. Nevertheless both Paganism and Popery had inferior, immediate, and active reasons for identifying Church and State. In Paganism, the religious theory

Present, and
ultimate,
views of
Christianity.

and prospects of man were but "of the earth, earthy." In Popery,* the religious *practice*, at least, was such also: viewed on a large scale, and historically, it was really "temporal," and not "spiritual." Paganism was not elevated enough in its religious *belief* to have a *distinct* view of Church and State. Popery was not elevated enough in practice. Even granting that Christianity, in its ultimate theory, will attain to that identification of Church and State, which both Paganism and Popery would forestal; yet nothing can set aside the present rule which our LORD has given us:—"Render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto GOD the things that are GOD's."

Let us never hesitate indeed to acknowledge that the Church, as an eternal community, is the mystical incorporation, or Body of CHRIST, infinitely transcending all earthly power; but, on the other hand, the State is a Divine arrangement for the time being—an "economy"—an accommodation, doubtless, to our present state of probation, to be regarded with reverence in its place, as the "ordinance of GOD for good," even though also the "ordinance of man."

* I hope it is hardly necessary to say that the word "Popery" is not used as a nickname, or term of disrespect in these pages; but as the most intelligible description of that system which centres in the POPEDOM.



